Daily Report

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CONTENTS

NOTICE TO READERS: An • indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Palestinian Affairs

Abu-Sharif Reportedly Resigns as 'Arafat Adviser *[MENA]* 1
Abu-Sharif Denies Resignation *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 1
PNC Secretary General on U.S. View of PLO *[AFP]* 1
Envoys To Explain PLO Position to Arab States *[Jerusalem AL-FAJR 19 Mar]* 1
PLO Welcomes Italian Prime Minister's Remarks *[Algiers VOP]* 1
PNSF: Syria Releases All Palestinian Detainees *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 2
'Abd Rabbuh Discusses Mideast Peace Settlement
[Frankfurt/Main FRANKFURTER RUNDSCHAU 18 Mar] 2
Hamas Calls For 'Crusaders' To Withdraw *[SAWT AL-SHA'B 7 Mar]* 3
Commentary on 'Conspiracy' Emerging Against Iraq *[Algiers VOP]* 3
Radio Reviews Mitterrand Stand on Palestine *[Algiers VOP]* 4

ARAB AFRICA

Algeria

•Ghozali Discusses Lessons Learned From Gulf *[Paris L'HUMANITE 8 Mar]* 5
Disapproval of Hamrouche Rising With Strikes *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 12 Mar]* 7

Egypt

Mubarak, Al-Asad To Meet in Cairo in 'Few Days' *[WAKH]* 7
Daily Opposes Actions To Fragment Iraq *[MENA]* 7

Tunisia

Ben Ali Congratulates Kuwaiti Amir on Return *[Tunis Radio]* 8
President Meets With 'Arafat in Carthage *[Tunis Radio]* 8
Ennahdha Movement Leaders Issue Statement *[Tunis Radio]* 8
Reportage on Ben Yahia Visit to Italy *[cross-reference]* 8

ARABIAN PENINSULA

Papers Support Palestinian People, Reject 'Arafat *[WAKH]* 9

Kuwait

Premier Meets U.S. Congressional Delegation *[London KUNA]* 9
Defense Minister on Presence of Foreign Troops *[Radio Kuwait]* 9
Minister Discusses Delay in Issuing Passports *[Radio Kuwait]* 9

Oman

Further on Iranian Minister Velayati's Visit 10
Discusses GCC, Regional Security *[Tehran Radio]* 10
Resumes Ties With Saudi Arabia *[WAKH]* 10
Saudi Minister Concludes Visit *[WAKH]* 10

Saudi Arabia

Crown Prince Receives Message From Senegal *[Riyadh Radio]* 10
Paper Praises U.S. Efforts on Palestine Issue *[SPA]* 10
Editorial Views UN Role in Mideast Settlement *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 10 Mar]* 10
Paper Urges Arab Planning in Postwar Scenario *[Riyadh Radio]* 11

United Arab Emirates

President Meets British Mideast Forces Commander *[WAKH]* 11
Forces Return From 'Central Military Region' *[WAKH]* 12

IRAQ

Opposition Radio Claims U.S. 'Advance' in Iraq *[Voice of Rebellious Iraq]* 13
Reactions to Saddam's 16 Mar Remarks Reported 13
'New National Phase' Hailed *[Baghdad Radio]* 13
Opposition Leader Rejects Proposals *[SANA]* 13
Opposition Radio Outlines Demands for Saddam *[Voice of Free Iraq]* 14
Kurdistan Democratic Party Cables Support to Saddam *[Baghdad Radio]* 15
Minister Visits Babil, Karbala' Officials *[INA]* 15
Vice President Ma'ruf Receives Mauritanian Envoy *[INA]* 15
Ibrahim Meets Kurdish Tribal Chiefs in Al-Ta'mim *[INA]* 16
Ba'th Party Official Chairs Meeting in Maysan *[Baghdad Radio]* 16
Government Forces Employ Missiles, Napalm 16
15,000 Killed Karbala', Al-Najaf *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 16
Napalm Used on Citizens *[Damascus Radio]* 17
Kurdish Towns Hit With Missiles *[Tehran TV]* 17
Kurdish Spokesman Views Bombing *[IRNA]* 17
Violence, Mob Activity Taking Place in Cities 17
Al-Basrah Violence Cited *[INA]* 17
Looting Reported in Babylon, Al-Najaf *[INA]* 18
'Riotous Acts' in Al-Najaf Viewed *[INA]* 18
'Criminal Mobs' Active in Karbala' *[INA]* 18
Committees To Assess Damage *[INA]* 18
Republican Guards Unleash 'Terror' *[IRNA]* 19
Rebel Radio Urges Military To Join Revolt *[Voice of Rebellious Iraq]* 19
Successes Against Pro-Saddam Forces Detailed *[Voice of Rebellious Iraq]* 20
Rebels Report Control Over Several Areas 20
Al-Kut, Jabbar Taken *[Voice of Rebellious Iraq]* 20
Radio Reports Karkuk Captured *[IRNA]* 20
Jalula Citizens Rebel, Seize Town *[Voice of Rebellious Iraq]* 21
Spokesman on Control of Kurdish Areas *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 21
Tehran TV Cites Refugees on Continued Fighting 21
Revolutionary Muslims, Republican Guards Clash *[Tehran Radio]* 21
'Fierce Fighting' Continues; Rebels Seize City *[Tehran Radio]* 22
Paper Warns of 'Punishment' for 'Agent' Forces *[Baghdad Radio]* 22
Karbala' Citizens View 'Sabotage,' Pledge Loyalty *[INA]* 23
Opposition Reportedly Forms 'Shadow Government' *[Cairo Radio]* 23
Opposition Forces Hold News Conference *[SANA]* 24
Schools, Teacher's Institutes To Reopen 23 Mar *[INA]* 24

ISRAEL

Shamir Rejects Baker Remarks on Annexation *[THE JERUSALEM POST 19 Mar]* 25
Shamir 'Opposed to' Palestinians Who Met Baker *[Jerusalem Radio]* 25
Terms Delegates 'PLO People' *[Jerusalem Radio]* 25
Shamir Says Resolution 242 Inapplicable to Golan *[Jerusalem TV]* 26
Shamir on Ethiopian Aliyah, Soviet Anti-Semitism *[Jerusalem Radio]* 26
Housing Ministry 'Determined' To Build in Golan *[Jerusalem Radio]* 26
Knesset Defeats No-Confidence Motions *[Jerusalem Radio]* 26

Jerusalem Examining Plan To Demilitarize Golan *['AL HAMISHMAR 19 Mar]* 26
Editorial Views Reaction to Olmert Golan Remark *[HADASHOT 19 Mar]* 27
Herzog, Shamir's Office Request Pardon for Pollard *[HADASHOT 15 Mar]* 27
Shomron on Future Battlefield, Borders, Intifadah *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 27
Moda'i Expects Pressure To Pay Territory for Aid *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 28
Shomron Discusses Postwar Situation, Settlement *[Jerusalem Radio]* 28
Netherlands Patriot Battery To Return Home *[Jerusalem Radio]* 28
Arens Expresses Thanks *[Hilversum International]* 28
First East Europe IDF Envoy Assigned to Prague *['AL HAMISHMAR 18 Mar]* 29
Levi Returns, Outlines German Aid Agreement *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 29
Reportage on David Levi Visit to Italy *[cross-reference]* 29
Syria, USSR 'Expected' To Sign Arms Deal *[HA'ARETZ 19 Mar]* 29
Lebanese Unit Commander Avows Unchanged Policy *[THE JERUSALEM POST 19 Mar]* 30
Army To Increase Aid to Lebanese Security Zone *[Jerusalem Radio]* 30
Increase in Exports to USSR, Poland Noted *[HATZOFE 18 Mar]* 30
No Objection to UN Mideast Envoy's Appointment *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 17 Mar]* 30
'Ami Popper Sentenced for Rishon Leziyyon Murders *[Jerusalem Radio]* 30
General Mordekhay on Intifadah, Jordanian Border *[Jerusalem TV]* 31
Palestinians Call For Open Talks With Shamir *[THE JERUSALEM POST 17 Mar]* 31
Al-Tayyiba Arabs Arrested for 'Terrorist' Acts *[MA'ARIV 14 Mar]* 32
Poll Shows Country Split on Territories for Peace *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 11 Mar]* 32

JORDAN

Royal Decree Adjourns Lower House Session *[JORDAN TIMES 17 Mar]* 33
Government May Participate in Arab League Session *[PETRA-JNA 18 Mar]* 33
Editorial Demands UN Resolutions Implementation *[AL-RA'Y 13 Mar]* 33
UN Criticized Over 'Occupation' of South Iraq *[JORDAN TIMES 16 Mar]* 34
Paper on Bush Interview With Arab Journalists *[AL-RA'Y 12 Mar]* 34
Editorial Urges Bush To Put Pressure on Israel *[SAWT AL-SHA'B 12 Mar]* 35
Paper Says Syria Possible Target of U.S. *[JORDAN TIMES 13 Mar]* 36
Paper Criticizes Arabs on 'Starvation' of Iraq *[AL-RA'Y 18 Mar]* 36
Iran's 'Conspiracy' Against Iraq, Arabs Examined *[AL-DUSTUR 13 Mar]* 37
Division Seen at Iraqi Opposition Meeting *[AL-DUSTUR 12 Mar]* 38
King, Yemeni President Exchange Congratulations *[PETRA-JNA]* 38
Editorial Discusses Principles of Foreign Policy *[AL-DUSTUR 14 Mar]* 38
Iran Reopens Embassy After 10 Years *[Tehran Radio]* 39
Women's Delegation Goes to Iraq With Relief Aid *[PETRA-JNA]* 39

LEBANON

Fadlallah Examines U.S. Regional Intentions *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 40
Sa'adah Says No Decision Yet on Participation *[Beirut Radio]* 40
Army Clashes With Israeli-Backed South Lebanese *[RFL]* 40
Army Deploys in Coastal Area; Equipment Arrives *[RFL]* 40
Foreign Airlines Resuming Flights to Beirut *[Beirut Radio]* 40

SYRIA

Khaddam Returns From Visit, Talks in Beirut *[Damascus Radio]* 42
Damascus Places Palestine Before Golan Heights *[Damascus Radio]* 42

SOUTH ASIA

Bangladesh

President, Opposition Discuss New Government *[Dhaka Radio]* 43
Ban on Political Assemblies in Dhaka Remains *[Dhaka Radio]* 43
Students Demand Early Trial for Ershad *[Dhaka Radio]* 43

India

Kuwaiti Official Seeks Reconstruction Cooperation *[Delhi Radio]* 43
Discusses Issue With President *[Delhi Radio]* 43
Further on Prime Minister's News Conference *[ISI]* 44
Naval Chief on 'Regional Security Arrangements' *[Delhi Radio]* 44
Gandhi Promises Stable, Secular Government *[Delhi Radio]* 44
Congress-I Opposes State Polls in Assam, Punjab *[Delhi Radio]* 45
BJP, Janata Dal-S Leaders on Election Issues *[Delhi Radio]* 45
Sikh 'Militant' Among 20 Killed in Punjab *[AFP]* 45
Police Suspect 'Militants' Behind Delhi Bombing *[Delhi Radio]* 45
Remote Sensing Satellite '90 Percent' Successful *[Delhi Radio]* 46

Iran

Golpayegani Surprised at Silence on Iraqi Crimes *[IRNA]* 46
Says Saddam Insults Islam *[Tehran Radio]* 46
Iraq Should Pay Reparations for Eight-Year War *[AFP]* 46
Desecration of Iraqi Holy Shrines Condemned 47
Khamene'i Issues Statement *[Tehran TV]* 47
Official Summons Iraqi Charge *[Tehran TV]* 47
Damage to Shrines 'Unforgivable' *[Tehran Radio]* 47
Khamene'i Says Saddam 'Cannot Remain for Long' *[IRNA]* 48
Terms U.S. Presence in Gulf 'Ineffectual' *[Tehran TV]* 48
President Meets Hizballah, Jihad, PFLP-GC *[IRNA]* 49
Iraq's Acts Against Uprising Criticized *[Tehran TV]* 49
Daily Comments on 'Popular Uprising' in Iraq *[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI 7 Mar]* 50
Further Press Comment *[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI 11 Mar]* 50
Tehran Daily on Regional Security Guidelines *[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI 6 Mar]* 51
Kurdish Deputy Calls for Revolt Against Saddam *[Tehran Radio]* 52
Majles Deputies Condemn Suppression in Iraq *[IRNA]* 52
U.S. Said To Benefit From Continued Saddam Rule *[RESALAT 9 Mar]* 52
Cabinet Introduces Two New Governors General *[Tehran Radio]* 53
Velayati Meets Italian Official; Reiterates Views *[Tehran Radio]* 53
100 IRGC Commanders, Officials Receive Promotion *[Tehran TV]* 53
WHO Official Inspects Iraqi Refugee Camps 53
Director General Arrives *[Tehran Radio]* 53
Sees President, Iraqi Refugees *[Tehran TV]* 53
Departs, Calls Talks 'Useful' *[Tehran Radio]* 54
Yazdi Says UK 'Spy' Will Serve Sentence *[Tehran Radio]* 54
Soviet Official Holds Talks on Afghanistan *[Tehran Radio]* 54
Tehran Radio Reports More Black Rainfall 54

Pakistan

Prime Minister's Address Marks Start of Ramadan *[Islamabad Radio]* 55
PRC Military Delegation Arrives in Islamabad *[Islamabad Radio]* 57
Meets Army Chief, Defense Officials *[Islamabad Radio]* 57
Khan Urges Implementation of Kashmir Resolution *[Islamabad Radio]* 57
Spokesman Condemns Indian Atrocities in Kashmir *[Islamabad Radio]* 57
Fundamentalist Muslims Demonstrate Against U.S. *[AFP]* 58
MQM Chief on Nationals' Return From Bangladesh *[Islamabad Radio]* 58

Sri Lanka

Government Reopens Embassy in Kuwait *[Colombo International]* 58
Indian Envoy Meets With Non-LTTE Tamils *[Delhi Radio]* 58
Security Forces' Operations in North, East Noted *[LANKAPUVATH]* 58

Palestinian Affairs

Abu-Sharif Reportedly Resigns as 'Arafat Adviser

NC1903105891 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1038 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Tunis, 19 Mar (MENA)—Bassam Abu-Sharif tendered his resignation as [political] adviser to Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat because of the statements recently attributed to him on the PLO's readiness to offer concessions in regard to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in exchange for the establishment of a Palestinian state.

Bassam Abu-Sharif had denied these statements in London, but some PLO leaders vehemently criticized him. The PLO had described these statements as expressions of personal opinion. Press reports today mention that Yasir 'Arafat is expected to accept Bassam Abu-Sharif's resignation, which he sent to Tunis from London.

Abu-Sharif Denies Resignation

NC1903125091 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1225 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] REUTER has said that in a telephone call with his office in Beirut, Bassam Abu-Sharif denied reports that he submitted his resignation to Yasir 'Arafat. Quoting its reporter in Tunis, REUTER said that Bassam Abu-Sharif, who is now in a European capital, has denied in a telephone call with officials in his Tunis office that he submitted his resignation to Yasir 'Arafat.

PNC Secretary General on U.S. View of PLO

NC1803180391 Paris AFP in English 1722 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Jerusalem, March 18 (AFP)—Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir on Monday rejected suggestions that he might meet a 10-member delegation of Palestinians who last week held talks with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. [passage omitted]

Elsewhere, Palestinian officials in Cairo said the doubt cast by Washington on the credibility of the PLO was merely an excuse to avoid implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 242, which requires an Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Muhammad Subayh, secretary general of the Palestine National Council (PNC), or parliament-in-exile, said U.N. resolutions on the territories exist and must be applied "whatever the PLO's inclinations" and regardless of judgements passed on the organization.

"If U.S. officials are truly concerned with attaining peace, they must translate their words on settlement of the Middle East conflict into deeds," Mr. Subayh told AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE. Mr. Subayh said a strong U.S. leadership intent on establishing peace "must make its voice heard to all the parties and tell the Israelis: You must not count on American support so long as you occupy the territories."

"The Palestinians want to hear the American administration recognize their right to self-determination and to live in peace with their neighbors in their own state, in the occupied West Bank and Gaza," he added. Mr. Subayh said the PNC alone was entitled to elect the chairman of the PLO's Executive Committee—currently Yasir 'Arafat.

Since no free elections can be organized for Palestinians in the occupied territories and in the diaspora, the PNC—"whose representativeness cannot be contested"—speaks for political and military movements, trade unions and associations as well as independent figures, Mr. Subayh insisted.

Envoys To Explain PLO Position to Arab States

TA1903140891 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in Arabic 19 Mar 91 p 1

[Text] AL-FAJR has learned that Palestinian envoys will visit a number of Arab capitals shortly to explain the PLO's position on current developments in the Middle East and the efforts aimed at finding a peaceful solution to the Palestinian problem in light of the suspect U.S. moves, which continue to ignore the PLO as a major and important party in any real settlement of the Palestinian problem.

The Palestinian envoys will ask the Arab states to affirm their commitment to the resolutions of Arab summits on political and economic levels with respect to the Palestinian problem. In addition, they will ask the Arab states to meet with the Palestinian leadership in order to rearrange the Arab home and draw up an effective Arab position that can confront the challenges that the Arab nation is facing. The Palestinian envoys will emphasize the Palestinian leadership's backing for fraternal Iraq and the need to support and aid Iraq so that it will overcome the effects of the aggression of the allies, led by the United States.

PLO Welcomes Italian Prime Minister's Remarks

LD1003203191 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 10 Mar 91

[Text] An official spokesman for the PLO has said the following:

The PLO has read the statements of His Excellency Italian Prime Minister Andreotti to the paper ALEKSANDRA on the reality of the Palestinian position in the Gulf crisis and the efforts by brother president Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] to solve this crisis away from the drums of war.

President Andreotti is a great friend of our Palestinian people and its just struggle for its national rights. He is well aware of the reality of the Palestinian position

toward the Gulf crisis since it began. As his excellency has said, the PLO was a real peace power in this crisis, seeking to avert the shadow of war, which we have suffered and will all suffer from its consequences.

PNSF: Syria Releases All Palestinian Detainees

NC1203134591 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Interview with Khalid al-Fahum, chairman of the Palestinian National Salvation Front, PNSF, by Louis Faris in Damascus on 12 March—recorded]

[Text] In Damascus, it was announced today that all the Palestinian detainees in Syria have been released. Their number and names are still not known. From Damascus, let us listen to our colleague Louis Faris:

[Begin recording] This morning all Palestinian political detainees who in the past committed violations that brought about their detention were released. Concerning this subject, I asked Khalid al-Fahum, chairman of the Palestinian National Salvation Front, the following question: How would you comment on the release of all the Palestinian detainees in Syria this morning?

[Al-Fahum] This news, concerning the release in brotherly Syria of all Palestinian detainees, who are political detainees, is confirmation of the pan-Arab and struggling stands, as well as of his noble and generous character, for which President Hafiz al-Asad is known. The move also underlines the strategic relations between Syria and the Palestinian revolution. The Palestinian struggle moves steadily ahead and makes great achievements according to how close it stays to Syria and to his excellency President Hafiz al-Asad, and it retreats and regresses according to how far it distances itself from Syria.

[Faris] Mr. Khalid, can you give a figure or approximate estimate of the number of people who were released?

[Al-Fahum's answer indistinct]

[Faris] Would you give us an estimate?

[Al-Fahum] Approximately several hundred.

[Faris] Hundreds?

[Al-Fahum] Yes. Please let me continue my comment.

[Fair] Go ahead.

[Al-Fahum] Keeping a distance from Syria and the (?negative) way in which matters developed with regard to the Palestinian problem and the heroic intifadah is the responsibility of the present feeble leadership of the PLO. That leadership has deviated from the established course of the PLO, particularly when it distanced itself from sisterly Syria and sided with Iraq in its occupation of Kuwait. We reiterate our greetings and heartfelt wishes for Arab Syria and its leader, the great struggler Hafiz al-Asad.

[Faris] Thank you. [end recording]

'Abd Rabbuh Discusses Mideast Peace Settlement

AU1803092991 Frankfurt/Main FRANKFURTER RUNDSCHAU in German 18 Mar 91 p 7

[Interview with Yasir Adib 'Abd Rabbuh, member of the PLO Executive Committee and "a close associate of PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat," by correspondent Werner Herzog; place and date not given: "The 'Telephone Call' From the Israeli Government Will Come"]

[Text] [Herzog] To give peace negotiations in the Middle East a chance, both sides—Israel and the PLO—should initiate confidence-building measures. How does the PLO envisage these measures?

[Rabbuh] We have taken a big step; in our peace initiative we proposed for the first time the formula of two independent states of Israel and Palestine. Therefore, we hope that Israel will give some sign for confidence-building. The other side has not done anything, however. Israel should at least state that it accepts the UN resolutions. This would be the platform for the start of negotiations. Will Washington urge Israel to do so? One does not need to drop bombs on Tel Aviv. A telephone call from the White House would do.

[Herzog] Who should be the partners in the negotiations on Palestine?

[Rabbuh] We think that, in addition to ourselves and Israel, the five permanent members of the UN Security Council (that is, the United States, the USSR, China, Great Britain, and France) and also a representative of the EC should participate in them. Peace in the region cannot be ensured without international verification. Separate peace negotiations are necessary for the Gulf problem. Israel, for instance, does not have anything to do with this problem.

[Herzog] There are people who demand that it should not be PLO leader 'Arafat or members of the Executive Committee but representatives of the territories occupied by Israel who should sit down at the negotiating table. What is the PLO's view on this?

[Rabbuh] We want to select our own representatives. In fair negotiations each side chooses its own representatives. We could chose not only politicians but also experts and technocrats for special issues, such as the delineation of the border, the water problem, etc. One cannot force anybody on us. We could select people who have been unknown so far; it is not necessary that our best-known people head the delegation; we will do what is necessary so that the negotiations end with a good result.

[Herzog] What role could France and Germany play in the peace process?

[Rabbuh] France will participate in negotiations and Germany should also be included. We therefore stress

the importance of the EC. Its role will mainly consist in exerting pressure on the United States to undertake concrete steps. We know that Washington could "freeze" the entire situation again as it did in the past decades. The perspective of the Americans as regards the Middle East problem is very narrow; the Europeans could influence them in this respect.

[Herzog] Should the PLO not take up the idea of a confederation with Jordan again?

[Rabbuh] Both sides accept the idea of a confederation. However, this is only a bilateral matter. It is not part of the political solution that we are expecting. The main thing is that Israel withdraws from the occupied territories. We will not give Israel any chance to split Jordan and the PLO.

[Herzog] In Palestine there is the religious "Hamas" [Islamic Resistance] movement. This movement is becoming increasingly strong. How much is the PLO disturbed by this?

[Rabbuh] Some circles in the West exaggerate the strength of the fundamentalists in order to demonstrate that the PLO is not the authentic representative of the Palestinians. Hamas is part of the PLO. The movement is represented in our parliament (PNC) and in the Central Council. Of course, the Hamas movement represents a trend, but this trend is not strong and influential. We Palestinians are religious but not fundamentalist. If you are looking for fundamentalists in this region, look at Israel and Iran. In Israel the fundamentalists are even directing government policy with their votes in parliament. In our organization this is not the case.

[Herzog] Does the PLO currently have any contacts with representatives of Israel?

[Rabbuh] Moshe Dayan said in 1967 that he expects a telephone call from the Arabs. We are very patient people. We are still waiting for the telephone call from the Israeli Government. I think that it will come.

Hamas Calls For 'Crusaders' To Withdraw

NC0703144091 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 7 Mar 91 p 15

[Text] Amman—The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, has called on the Kuwaiti people to realize that ties with the Iraqi people are those of faith, blood, and neighborliness. Therefore, we must all heal our wounds and rise to the level of our faith and brotherly relations. We must not allow the infidels to remain among us to sow corruption and division.

In a statement issued yesterday, Hamas said that we remind our brothers in Kuwait of the ties of faith, brotherhood, and kinship with the Palestinian people. We remind them that they should not heed those who sow sedition between them and the Palestinians residing in Kuwait.

The statement added that the United States, the head of the Crusader-Zionist alliance, is not concerned with the interests of our nation, but rather is the real enemy who works in accordance with the Jews' plan.

Hamas called on the masses of the Arab and Islamic nation to stand firmly, resolutely, determinedly, and courageously before the U.S. alliance. They should demand the withdrawal of the Crusaders' navies and armies from Iraq, the Arabian Peninsula, and the entire region, and reject the new security order which the United States is trying to impose on the region.,

The Islamic Resistance Movement called on the Arab and Islamic countries and all Arab and Islamic movements and peoples to reject all UN resolutions on Palestine aimed at giving legitimacy to the usurping Zionist entity on any part of our blessed Palestinian land, as it is a blessed land and the responsibility of every Muslim and Arab.

Commentary on 'Conspiracy' Emerging Against Iraq

LD0603202991 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 5 Mar 91

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Brothers, what is happening today in Iraq and the conspiracy emerging against its stability and territorial integrity at the hands of forces which are beginning to multiply not only in their nationalities but also in their allegiances and objectives, certainly embarrasses the United States and forces it to an immediate revision of all that it had planned against Iraq—whether its forces, security, or territorial integrity.

It is true that the United States saw Iraq's power after its emergence from the eight-year war with Iran as a danger threatening its interests in the region. It is also true that it has undertaken willfully to reduce this power as much as possible, which would solidify the U.S. position in the region and the world. Iraq, however, has been able to escape the U.S. trap without surrendering, thus achieving a difficult balance.

Many believed that Iraq had collapsed or was about to collapse. This encouraged some of them to grab the opportunity, in accordance with the adage of not letting your enemy lick his wounds, and rushed to implement their old plans against Iraq, starting from the north and under a Shiite [word indistinct] backed not only by the Iranian mullas but also by the Iranian popular army and all its military equipment which is moving south of Iraq in order to tear Iraq apart.

This new situation renders the U.S. calculation of the picture all the more complicated. The matter now no longer concerns Iraq as a power confronting the United States and its tyranny, but relates to the balance in the region, which was one of the objectives behind hitting

the Iraqi force after artificially creating the Iran-Iraq war and prolonging it in order to weaken any force other the Zionists'.

Iran today is taking advantage of the U.S. slogan calling for the toppling of the regime in Iraq so as to achieve an extension for itself and its forces as embodied in the Islamic Shiite revolution. Where does the United States stand? The United States does indeed want and dreams of toppling the Iraqi regime, and it wants and dreams of weakening the Iraqi Army. It does not, however, accept that this should be to the advantage of Iran; rather it wants it to be to the advantage of Israel, and therefore to its own advantage.

But Iran, which wants to impose a wide regional role for itself in the rearrangement of regional affairs does not stop at conspiring against Iraq and its territorial integrity, but also is mobilizing the Shiite opposition in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. This magnifies the Iranian danger in the region, in the U.S. eye, to become equal to the Iraqi danger to U.S. interests.

Once again, how will the United States behave? Will it revert to the old game of nourishing the fighting between Iraq and Iran [words indistinct] requires its rushing to lift the economic and military sanctions on Iraq at the UN Security Council so that Iraq can import more weapons in this new confrontation? If the United States does so, it will lose credibility for the second time around and will go back on all its declared objectives in the Gulf before and after the aggression against Iraq. Or will the United States conspire with Iran, against Iraq, and give it a much greater and more comprehensive regional role than it had envisaged and planned?

If the United States does so, it will be like jumping out of the frying pan into the fire, for by accepting the Iranian role in the Gulf, it will revive all the Islamic movements in the Arab homeland and hasten the day when the fundamentalist current sweeps through the whole region. Such a current could be easily converted into jihad against both Israel and the United States in its capacity, in the eyes of Iran, as the international power of arrogance.

The tables have indeed been turned. In this new situation, the United States cannot afford to become a mere spectator waiting for the results to unfold. It also realizes the future dangers of its decision to support Iran against the stability of Iraq and its territorial integrity. The easiest option for the United States thus becomes to lift the economic and military sanctions on Iraq quickly to facilitate its acquisition of more weapons in order to stand up to the Shiite current backed with the full Iranian weight.

It will, however, try to control the next conflict between Iraq and Iran so that it can avert the same result in which the conflict culminated after the eight-year conflict. No one can ascertain that it will be able to impose its control after all strings have suddenly slipped through its fingers.

Radio Reviews Mitterrand Stand on Palestine

LD0803225991 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 8 Mar 91

[Excerpts] The proposals of French President Francois Mitterrand for convening a session of the UN Security Council at the level of heads of states and governments dealing with international legitimacy with one standard to solve the Palestinian issue in accordance with UN Security Council's resolutions in a way to guarantee the establishment of an independent [Palestinian] state have great importance. [passage omitted]

Now that a date has been fixed for the convening of a summit between the French and U.S. Presidents, in two weeks' time, we wonder what France's stance will be if the U.S. President rejects President Mitterrand's proposals completely. Will France and the European states be content with continuing to try to solve the Palestinian issue through statements, communiques, and proposals? Anyway, the states and peoples of the world have just witnessed a destructive war against Iraq which broke out under the banner of UN Security Council Resolution 678, which was adopted after all the UN Security Council's resolutions on Kuwait.

We wonder with a loud voice: What kind of world order is this which is based on the division of international legitimacy?

Algeria

*Ghozali Discusses Lessons Learned From Gulf

*91AA0243A Paris L'HUMANITE in French
8 Mar 91 pp 16-20*

[Interview with Sid Ahmed Ghozali, Algeria's minister of foreign affairs, by Arnaud Spire, special correspondent in Algiers; date and place not given: "The Threat May Come From the North"]

[Text] [Spire] What is your assessment of the solidarity demonstrated by the Arab world before and during the Gulf war?

[Ghozali] A wealth of lessons of all kinds is to be drawn from that crisis. First, nothing could have happened—neither the invasion of Kuwait, nor the war unleashed against Iraq—if the Arabs had not reached such a state of division and impotence before the crisis. The lack of unity we observe today is not a consequence of the invasion and the war; it is one of the factors that rendered the invasion and the war possible.

Furthermore, none of it could have happened if there had been a minimum of democracy in these Arab countries. The two preliminary observations I have just made are necessary—not that we are to blame ourselves, as the destruction was caused essentially by non-Arabs—but in order to face the future squarely. If the concept of the Arab nation truly extended beyond that of a cultural, historic, and geographic unit to include solidarity, the tragedy that has just transpired would not have been possible.

[Spire] But, isn't the Arab world rich in oil resources that it could manage differently?

[Ghozali] The Gulf represents five percent of the Arab population and more than 50 percent of the gross national product (GNP) of the Arab world taken as a whole. However, we are very far from the overabundance of wealth and fortune and the torrents of oil that the West believes to be characteristic of us. If you include all this supposed wealth in the combined GNP of the 21 countries that make up the Arab world, you arrive at a GNP of less than one-third that of Italy, for example. And if you divide that figure by the 220 million inhabitants of the Arab world, the GNP per capita is, in fact, 12 times less than that of Italy's 60 million inhabitants. The Arab world is characterized not by an overabundance of wealth, but by a profoundly uneven distribution of wealth, perpetuated by a total lack of solidarity between those who have the greater share of it and those who have the lesser share.

[Spire] This state of affairs is exacerbated, is it not, by the violations of international law that the United States has perpetrated with the blessing of the United Nations?

[Ghozali] That is the second lesson to be drawn from the war. It relates to that that is permissible under international law. Kuwait's ambassador came to thank me on 2 August for the position taken by the Algerian Government 24 hours sooner than the Arab countries as a whole: We rejected the invasion, refused to recognize force as a means of dealing with disagreements between neighboring countries, and demanded the immediate withdrawal of Iraqi troops, the return of Kuwait's sovereignty, and peaceful negotiations. I responded by telling the ambassador that it was not necessary to thank me, that we were applying a principle that Algeria has upheld at all times and in all instances.

No self-respecting state—particularly in a country that is weaker than others—should "play" with international principles, notably the principle of respecting borders inherited from a certain order—even the colonial order. That is true to an even greater degree of the principle of not resorting to force to settle disputes between states. "Playing" with that principle just once should lead one to expect the possibility of becoming the next victim.

[Spire] What is your opinion, then, of "the new order" George Bush wants to impose on the world?

[Ghozali] The third lesson to be drawn from the crisis is, no doubt, that the new order—in the name of which the greatest economic and military power in the world destroyed an Arab country—has begun in a terribly alarming way. Indeed, the law of the strongest is being consolidated in the field.

At the beginning of our interview, I emphasized the inadequacy of democracy in the Arab countries. But the democracy that exists in the Western world, although very old and well-established, proved terribly vulnerable during this crisis. That is the fourth lesson on which we should reflect. The consummate skill with which the Western media as a whole participated in an operation of disinformation, as if following an orchestra conductor's baton, is uncanny. For more than seven months, they presented one version of what their governments were engaged in and that version had nothing to do with reality. For example, the idea that Iraq possessed the fourth largest army in the world was implanted into the minds of the public, including the Arab masses. To a normally sensible person, it is inconceivable that an underdeveloped country would be able to build, in less than 10 years' time, an army superior in strength to such Western armies as the those of England, France, Germany, Spain, Italy, or the Eastern armies of India or Pakistan. But it was believed in the West. It was asserted that a Nazi regime existed somewhere in the Middle East, seeking to build a phenomenal army that would threaten the world, and this was not an innocent assertion. The imbalance of power is such that Kuwait could easily have been liberated in two or three days. But the American-led coalition made "the pleasure" last six weeks in order to lend credence a posteriori to the myth of a gigantic Iraqi Army and, simultaneously, to afford

itself the time to inflict maximum destruction on Iraq. For that was the purpose of the operation.

[Spire] But that was not the mandate provided by the UN Security Council?

[Ghozali] It is proven that it is possible to divert the means and resources of the United Nations in order to lend an air of legality to an operation that was actually aimed at the destruction pure and simple of a country and a regime. Regardless, by the way, of how one might judge that regime. That is the fifth lesson in this conflict. For, if you are willing to believe that the goal pursued was to topple an undemocratic regime, you might ask yourself if the United States needed all the coalition members who joined the operation to lend it a purely POLITICAL cover. Indeed, at the military level, the United States did not need France or England, much less Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Syria. Does that mean that the Western coalition leaders believed their allies' governments to be more democratic than Iraq's?

[Spire] What has led you to say that "Algeria's first duty is self-reliance?"

[Ghozali] As Algerians and Maghrebins, we conclude that no matter what is entailed in this new order we are hearing about, the Third World countries have only themselves to count on. That is the sixth lesson of this crisis. What has just happened can only strengthen our conviction that the Third World countries must organize themselves with regard to national policies and the expansion of trade among themselves. In that framework, a credible policy of regional groupings, competently executed, is the royal road toward greater strength for these countries. Within the Arab world, the Maghreb is no longer a simple choice or a gamble; it is becoming the obvious course to take, in our eyes.

[Spire] Has the future of cooperation among Mediterranean countries been compromised once and for all? Is it not possible to rebuild relationships on a fresh foundation in line with the aspirations of the peoples?

[Ghozali] We have Arab neighbors and African neighbors. Our most important neighbors, in terms of what they can do, are the Europeans. Our relations with them are based upon interests. With four of them (France, Italy, Spain, and Portugal), we have begun to discuss cooperation in security matters. In these discussions, we will have to give consideration to a new factor, a precedent that has been set, as we see it. We are forced to weigh the fact that in the future, the threat could come from the North. Who can assure us that another pretext will not be found in order to destroy the military and economic potential of a country whose stands displease the West? Let's take Algeria, for instance. Is it not true that there are very serious politicians in France who, in reaction to the publicity surrounding Islamic fundamentalism, say that the threat, in their eyes, could come from the South? The readers of L'HUMANITE are surely aware of the fact that several political parties in France have, in the course of history, felt impelled to press bellicose stands. We have no guarantee that some government will not view the course of internal events in Algeria as favorable to fundamentalism and consequently a threat, and obtain who knows what resolution from the United Nations. And that would actually serve as a pretext to lay hands on interests that are considered vital. To us in Algeria, that is the seventh lesson to be gleaned from the way in which the Gulf conflict was prepared, managed, handled and wrapped up. Didn't I learn from the history textbooks of the French school that the official decision to conquer Algeria is thought to have been made after the Bey of Algiers struck the French consul with his fan?

[Spire] What direction does Algeria propose for the United Nations to take?

[Ghozali] The existing United Nations mechanism dates from the Cold War. Five countries were "more equal" than the others by virtue of their veto power in the Security Council. That was understandable so long as there was equilibrium between two systems, between East and West. But we have entered a world that is entirely unipolar. Since 2 August, the Security Council has adopted 12 resolutions. Each time, it endorsed what the Americans—the strongest member—had decided. Algeria is going to work with others to create an international current in favor of renovating this system that removes all guarantees of peace and security in the world.

[Spire] The Gulf conflict does not seem to have brought a solution to the Palestinian problem any nearer....

[Ghozali] The Palestinian question—and nothing else—is at the center of what has just happened, in the genesis of the crisis as well as in the unleashing of the war. When we sought to give priority to a political solution, we were told that any linkage between the Gulf crisis and the Palestinian problem was out of the question, but that as soon as the conflict was settled, the Palestinian question would be taken up. We have not forgotten that and we are getting ready to bring the matter up forcefully in the international bodies. At a time when the Israeli Army is more than ever aware of its superior strength in the region, is it possible to convince Israel to back down peacefully, through negotiations, from the disenfranchisement it is formulating for the Palestinians? We doubt it, all the more so because a campaign alleging inability on the part of the PLO to represent the Palestinian people because it supported Saddam Husayn has just been launched by Pierre Mauroy, the first secretary of France's Socialist Party, with the Socialist International of Europe behind him, and even certain governments.

[Spire] Does Algeria need assistance?

[Ghozali] Algeria is not requesting assistance. In the domain of economic relations, there is, at present, a problem of investments, which must be discussed at the political level. Trust has been severely shaken. I am

referring not only to the reactions in the streets, but also to the positions our intellectuals have taken.

Disapproval of Hamrouche Rising With Strikes

91P40184A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 12 Mar 91 pp 1, 4

[Report by Qasi Salih al-Darwish]

[Text] Paris, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Algiers has witnessed two days of general strikes. Its economic life has been paralyzed in response to a call by the General Union of Algerian Workers [UGTA] for a protest against the continually rising prices and the general economic policy of the Mouloud Hamrouche government, which has led to an increase in the number of unemployed and a lessening of purchasing power among citizens.

The UGTA warned the government about these strikes last week, but the government, which has promised in the past to strive to leave the door of dialogue open, replied violently to the unions' warning, characterizing it as bluster and lies.

The government took this harsh position after the scope of the disapproval toward its economic position expanded on the part of heretofore loyal or allied elements within the regime.

This was the case with Abdulaziz Belkhadem, speaker of the National Assembly (parliament), who distributed a sharp-tongued letter to deputies and journalists addressed to the prime minister about the price rises. This letter surprised political circles in Algeria because Belkhadem had played a large role in previous months in supporting Hamrouche and even in preventing his ouster, especially after President Bendjedid had given parliament the green light to play its role in criticizing and judging him.

These circles explained the change in Belkhadem's position by saying that he was showing his well-known feelings that ill winds would blow soon in the direction of the prime minister and his government, and that for this reason he preferred not to remain on the same ship when it was in peril of sinking.

This happened after President Bendjedid mentioned in his most recent speech in Hassi Messaoud that in a few weeks he would announce the date of the next legislative elections. Circles near the president explained this as meaning that he would set the election date for June, not in the fall as had been expected, and as Mouloud Hamrouche had hoped and requested.

Informed sources asserted that the prime minister was surprised by the president's statement, and expressed rejection and hurt, saying, "He should give the government a chance and enough time to allow the economic improvements to reap benefits. As long as the situation is the way it is, there is no need to change the government. Let us wait for the elections so that we can leave together." The circles close to the president said that he should not make ministerial changes now just to bring in a new man who is obedient to him, and that Hamrouche's failure is also the president's failure as things are up to now. They added that Bendjedid is waiting for the next election so that the new government would have a parliamentary majority.

Egypt

Mubarak, Al-Asad To Meet in Cairo in 'Few Days'

NC1803162591 Manama WAKH in English 1533 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Doha, March 18 (GNA)—The Egyptian and Syrian presidents Husni Mubarak and Hafiz al-Asad will meet in Cairo within the few days to come to review the outcome of the tour U.S. Secretary of State James Baker made to the region recently, particularly matters connected with arrangements for settling the Arab-Israeli conflict and concepts made available in this respect in light of Baker's recent visit to Israel.

Quoting diplomatic sources in Cairo, Qatari AL-RAYAH newspaper said during their meeting to take place prior to U.S. President George Bush's coming tour of the region. [sentence as received]

The two leaders will also discuss prospects of boosting joint Arab action following the Gulf crisis and the role the two countries are expected to play concerning post-war security arrangements in light of the recent Damascus Declaration.

Daily Opposes Actions To Fragment Iraq

NC1903092691 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0812 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Cairo, 19 Mar (MENA)—AL-AHRAM affirms that so long as the Iraqi Army remains loyal to the current regime, any activities against this regime will only cause bloodshed, or will fragment the state and the people. These things are unacceptable.

In a commentary today AL-AHRAM says that following Saddam Husayn's defeat in the war, serious disturbances began in southern Iraq which later spread to the north in a manner that threatens to fragment Iraq. This is because the Kurds raised their own flags instead of the Iraqi flags. Because of this, the Iraqi Government tried to use planes to strike at the rebel forces. But the United States threatened to destroy these planes if they attacked the rebel forces.

AL-AHRAM adds: In spite of the fact that we totally oppose Saddam Husayn's regime and are fully convinced that all the problems and perils that engulf Iraq stem from the mistakes this regime has committed, it is unacceptable that any country in the world would work in a direction that will only bring about Iraq's fragmentation.

Concluding its editorial under the headline "The Iraqi People and Their Right to Self-Determination," the paper says that the best thing would be to leave the state and the people in Iraq to reorganize their domestic affairs while the international community would intervene only with respect to the question of Iraq's relations with its neighbors and Iraq's commitments to the international community in general.

Tunisia

Ben Ali Congratulates Kuwaiti Amir on Return

LD1503081791 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 2300 GMT 14 Mar 91

[Telegram from President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali to Kuwaiti Amir Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah; place and date not given—read by announcer]

[Text] It pleases me on the occasion of the return of Your Highness to fraternal Kuwait, which has recovered its sovereignty and retrieved its land, to address to you the sincerest fraternal congratulations and truest good wishes, praying to God to accord you good health and to guide the steps of your people on the road to reconstructing its country in a climate of security and stability. We trust that the fraternal State of Kuwait will continue its active role in strengthening Arab ranks and in contributing to the realization of the progress and prosperity to which the Arab nation aspires, in line with the sincere efforts and true will to build an Arab future of mutual respect and fraternal solidarity. Your Highness and Dear Brother, kindly accept the highest expressions of cordiality and appreciation.

President Meets With 'Arafat in Carthage

LD1403181591 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 14 Mar 91

[Text] President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali met Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat this afternoon at the Republican Palace in Carthage. 'Arafat expressed to the head of state his appreciation for the stance taken by the recent Maghreb summit in support of the Palestine issue, which was clearly shown in the important final communique which laid down clear pan-Arab and principled bases regarding the Palestine issue and Arab action.

Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] said that meeting also dealt with the coming steps with regards to the Arab edifice and reuniting the Arab nation on a correct basis that will guarantee the building of its future civilization within an international concord, which will not be at its own expense. He said that the mission undertaken by the Arab Maghreb leaders was fundamental, they constituted a pillar to the Arab nation, and we pray for their success in that patriotic and pan-Arab mission.

Ennahdha Movement Leaders Issue Statement

LD0803103691 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 0600 GMT 8 Mar 91

[Text] Three members of the Executive Bureau of the so-called Ennahdha Movement, Abdelfattah Mourou, Fadel al Beldi, and Ben Aissa al Demni, announced in a statement signed by them yesterday the freezing of their membership and activity inside the Ennahdha Movement. Following is the text of the statement:

Praise be to God, the one and only. It has become clear to us, the undersigned, Abdelfattah Mourou, Fadel al Beldi and Ben Aissa Demni, that some youths belonging to the Ennahdha Movement were involved—with the agreement of some of the movement's leadership—in the painful incident in which the party liaison headquarters of the Democratic Constitutional Rally in Bab Souika was attacked. We consider this behavior as irresponsible and are surprised that it was done by people belonging to our movement despite its contravention with our political choices.

At this time we renew, from a principled position, our condemnation of this irresponsible behavior. We stress our adherence to peaceful means and our commitment to use all our abilities to keep out irresponsible means. We utterly believe such means are futile and incompatible with our society and do not serve the future of our dear country, which is characterized by the values of forgiveness and cooperation, in addition to their being rejected by our religious and cultural values.

We want to warn against the need to intensify everybody's efforts to keep out everything that could disturb the atmosphere and harm our country, until a climate conducive to proper behavior, especially under these circumstances in which our country needs credibility, cooperation, and solidarity for the sake of a dawning future, becomes available.

On this basis, we now declare the freezing of our membership and activities inside the Ennahdha Movement, pending the decisions which we may take in the near future. We call upon all those with a sincere will to keep out all such behavior and thus help to suppress dangers and make available the opportunities for progress and awakening.

Reportage on Ben Yahia Visit to Italy

WA1503143391

For reportage on the visit by Foreign Minister Ben Yahia to Italy, including reports on his talks with Italian Foreign Minister Gianni de Michelis on holding a conference on security and cooperation in the Mediterranean, please see the Italy section of the 15 March West Europe DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

Papers Support Palestinian People, Reject 'Arafat

NC1403202091 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0730 GMT 14 Mar 91

[From the press review]

[Excerpt] Manama, 14 Mar (WAKH)—[passage omitted] In the United Arab Emirates [UAE] the newspaper AL-BAYAN emphasizes the UAE's firm, principled position regarding the Palestinian issue and the Palestinian people's right to their land and their aspiration to establish their independent state.

The paper says in its editorial that this position differs from the stand of the Palestinian leadership, which aided the Iraq aggression and invasion of Kuwait and supported the Iraqi dictator in challenging the Arab and international legitimacy, thus "incurring the burden of calamites that have afflicted the Kuwaiti and Iraqi people and the entire Arab nation."

The paper notes that, irrespective of the excesses committed by some irresponsible Palestinian elements, "this will never alter one of the firm bases of the UAE's foreign policy; namely, acceptance of the Palestinian people's demands and the commitment to the relevant resolutions adopted at the Arab summit conferences."

The paper affirms that the UAE is following with interest U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's tour of the Middle East. The UAE has also noted the positive signals in this respect that came in the U.S. President's speech on the eve of the secretary of state's arrival in the area, especially his statement that the United States believes the time has come to exert all efforts for a peaceful, just settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict on the basis of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, as well as on the basis of the principle of territory for peace and respect for the Palestinian people's legitimate rights.

The Qatari newspaper AL-SHARQ refers to yesterday's conflicting reports on the PLO's position on current peace efforts in the Middle East. At a time when Bassam Abu-Sharif, political adviser to the PLO chairman, was cited as having said that new concessions with regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict would be announced, the PLO quickly issued a statement from its headquarters in Tunis asserting that Abu-Sharif's statement represented his personal view.

The paper says that political observers interpret the Palestinian statement and its simultaneous denial as a sounding of both the Israeli and U.S. positions. The paper notes that the PLO wants to ascertain whether Washington is prepared to negotiate with the PLO under its traditional leadership that supports Iraq.

In any case, the paper goes on to say, it has not yet become clear—through U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's tour—whether the United States, by resuming the Palestinian-U.S. dialogue, means to revert to its previous relationship with the PLO.

Concluding its editorial, the paper affirms its support for any new views that will restore Palestine to the Palestinians, but without 'Arafat's leadership reaping what others have sown. [passage omitted]

Kuwait

Premier Meets U.S. Congressional Delegation

LD1803133991 London KUNA in Arabic 1253 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Formerly Kuwait KUNA]

[Text] Kuwait, 18 Mar (KUNA)—A delegation consisting of 26 U.S. Congress members conferred here today with Shaykh Sa'd al-Abdullah al-Salim al-Sabah, Kuwaiti heir apparent and prime minister.

During the meeting the congress members offered "their congratulations on the occasion of the liberation of Kuwait" and expressed their sincere condolences for "the Kuwaiti martyrs." They also expressed the readiness of their country to participate in rebuilding Kuwait.

Shaykh Sa'd al-Abdullah al-Salim thanked the delegation for "their sincere feelings" and expressed the Kuwaiti people's and government's appreciation for the firm and principled support given by the U.S. Government and people to the Kuwaiti cause.

He also stressed Kuwait's welcome of the participation of the American institutions and companies in rebuilding Kuwait.

Defense Minister on Presence of Foreign Troops

LD1703133891 (Clandestine) Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1300 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Text] Kuwaiti Defense Minister Shaykh Nawwaf al-Ahmad has affirmed that the decision concerning the presence of the coalition military forces in Kuwait, whether they were neutral forces, UN Forces, or U.S. forces, rests with the Kuwaiti political leadership.

In a statement to the Kuwaiti newspaper 26 FEBRUARY, published today, Shaykh Nawwaf said that the U.S. military forces which participated in the liberation of Kuwait will leave the region once they complete their missions, as affirmed by the U.S. President, George Bush.

He said that 35 percent of the Kuwaiti Armed Forces took part in repulsing the Iraqi Army, despite the fact that the Kuwaiti Army was not placed on alert prior to 2 August.

Minister Discusses Delay in Issuing Passports

LD1803111991 (Clandestine) Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1000 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Kuwaiti Interior Minister Shaykh Salim al-Salim al-Sabah has stated that new Kuwaiti passports will not

be issued before three months because of the difficulty in finding a permanent headquarters for the General Administration of Nationality and Passports. He pointed out that all the modern equipment for use in producing the new passports is now in Cairo.

With regard to the fate of the residents and foreign communities who wish to leave Kuwait, the interior minister says that his country does not object to their departure as long as they obtain a preliminary permit to enter the country they wish to visit. He points out that the number of Kuwaitis who left Kuwait during the past days is about 50,000 citizens.

Oman

Further on Iranian Minister Velayati's Visit

Discusses GCC, Regional Security

NC1703080291 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Text] Foreign Minister Velayati met Sultan Qabus, head of the country of Oman, yesterday in Muscat. A message from President Hashemi-Rafsanjani on the future of the region's security was handed to Sultan Qabus, who heads the committee for regional security arrangements of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council. He said in the meeting: The Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] is trying to create a collective security system, in the first phase among the internal members of the Council. On principle, this concerns only the Persian Gulf countries.

He explained: That group of Arab countries who are anticipating concessions for themselves cannot act as guardians of the Gulf Cooperation Council members in the Persian Gulf region.

In conclusion, the Sultan of Oman expressed his gratitude for the message by our president and conveyed his warmest wishes. He expressed pleasure at the cordial relations between the two countries.

Resumes Ties With Saudi Arabia

NC1803162291 Manama WAKH in English 1520 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Muscat, March 18 (GNA)—Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati and his accompanying delegation left Muscat today at the end of a three-day official visit to the Sultanate of Oman. He was seen off upon departure by Omani state minister for foreign affairs Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah and the Iranian ambassador to the Sultanate and other officials.

Velayati had stated here last night that Iran and Saudi Arabia agreed to settle pending problems and to restore diplomatic relations between them during the next 48 hours.

Saudi Minister Concludes Visit

NC1803174491 Manama WAKH in English 1530 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Muscat, March 18 (GNA)—Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal left here this morning following a one-day visit to Oman.

While here he held discussions with his Iranian counterpart Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati that dealt with the agreement on the restoration of diplomatic relations between the two countries within the next two days.

Saudi Arabia

Crown Prince Receives Message From Senegal

LD1703121491 Riyadh Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Excerpt] His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, crown prince, deputy prime minister, and commander of the National Guard, received in his office in the Royal Court in al-Yamamah Palace this afternoon His Excellency Babacar Mbaye, secretary general of the Senegalese Cabinet, who handed his royal highness a message for King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques from the Senegalese President Abdou Diouf. [passage omitted]

Paper Praises U.S. Efforts on Palestine Issue

LD1403114991 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0800 GMT 14 Mar 91

[From the Press Review]

[Text] Riyadh, 14 March (SPA)—'AL-YAWM' writes that the current moves of the U.S. President show that he has honored the promise he had made to discuss the Palestine question immediately after the end of the Gulf crisis.

The paper adds that the situation now seems ready for reaching a just comprehensive solution for the Palestine question involving Israeli withdrawal from the land in accordance with UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, which is what the current U.S. policy is concentrating on.

The paper adds that nothing now remains for Israel other than to agree implicitly and practically to withdraw from the Arab lands and recognize the Palestinian people and their right to self-determination and to the establishment of their independent state in their land and homeland.

Editorial Views UN Role in Mideast Settlement

PM1503102091 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 10 Mar 91 p 11

[Editorial: "Serious Steps For Peace In The Region"]

[Text] While the new world order was rising from the ashes of the cold war and while world states were

formulating the new order on the basis of cooperation, peace, stability, and development to replace fighting, conflict, and aggression, the Iraqi invasion and occupation of Kuwait emerged as the first real challenge and test to the world and its new order.

By liberating Kuwait, the world has passed the test and confronted the challenge. It has also proved its ability to repulse aggression, emphasizing that there can be no return to a stage now regarded as something of the past.

Undoubtedly the new world order and international law, as represented by the United Nations, are the greatest victors in this test.

So for the sake of international law—as emphasized by U.S. President George Bush, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, and other world leaders—the United Nations, with the international community's support, is expected to play a major role in resolving this region's and other regions' issues and in the process of building the new world order, one aspect of which, as President Bush said in the interview which AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT participated in and publishes today, is "to stand up to aggression."

Through the victory scored by international law, by ending the Iraqi aggression and liberating Kuwait, the United Nations now enjoys a major role in building the new order, since it is now—for the first time in its history—working unitedly: no trouble or defiance.

But despite what that victory has proved—namely, the reality of the major progress toward building the world order and cooperation between states, irrespective of their regimes and orientations—there are still challenges which must be confronted. The world acknowledges that the foremost of these is to resolve the Palestinian issue, not on the basis of a coercive linkage between it and the region's other issues, as some have demanded, but on the basis of the foundations on which the world continues to build its new order and to which it gives precedence. It has started to build them, capitalizing on the success that it has achieved in order to confront the greater challenge created by the Iraqi aggression.

Will international law succeed in confronting this challenge? Indications and events show that it is inevitable. This is supported by the determination to work to implement the unprecedented international will that we are witnessing today.

Paper Urges Arab Planning in Postwar Scenario

LD1103100691 Riyadh Domestic Service in Arabic 0400 GMT 11 Mar 91

[From the Press Review]

[Text] In an article headlined Post War Solutions, the newspaper AL-RIYAD writes: We are aware that Arab failures are numerous and that what the military and their governments have brought about has turned out to be more cruel than colonialist domination, and that the Palestinian question, which is central to Arab problems, was not addressed with the same truthfulness, sincerity and spirit afforded the policies of other individuals and their aspirations.

The paper points out: There is more than one plan for resolving the region's questions: the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Lebanese crisis and the consequences of Iraq's war with the world. We note, however, that while the outside world is truly interested in the establishment of peace and the establishment of principled plans for coexistence among the region's countries, there is no equal interest at the Arab level to put forward a serious comprehensive plan to eliminate the difficult past and lay the foundation for a more objective and clearer future.

The paper adds: In his numerous speeches, President George Bush said that the region must be made into a region of peace. The necessary factors for this should not be founded on wrong data nor on trying to redress a wrong with another wrong. For this reason, we feel that the required Arab role does not exist in its positive character. This is because most Arab countries are divided among themselves, so much so that those who had accompanied Saddam into the rings of fire have now begun to express their regret without clearly defining their positions. Or it could be that, as time moved in another direction, they could not keep up and consequently no longer can make the decision which would put them in responsible positions.

The meetings of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, with Egypt and Syria, and the recent Damascus Declaration, might, however, lay the foundation for a new type of Arab policy based not on ostentations but on positive actions.

Concluding, the paper writes: The tour of the U.S. Secretary of State aims to push the pending issues into the forefront of events, because the experience of the war with Iraq will not be the final experience if the old conditions continued to prevail. What is more important is that the war was waged with international blessing. Consequently, parallel acton should be taken for solving the region's problems with the same measure of unanimity, so wars and tensions will not continue to produce chaos, and other crises that can lead to more war and more devastation can be avoided.

United Arab Emirates

President Meets British Mideast Forces Commander

NC1803212891 Manama WAKH in Arabic 2030 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 18 Mar (WAKH)—His Highness Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the United Arab Emirates [UAE], met with General Sir

Peter de la Billiere in Abu Dhabi today. Sir Peter is the commander of the British forces in the Middle East and is currently visiting the UAE.

During the meeting, they reviewed the close relations and joint cooperation between the UAE and Britain.

Forces Return From 'Central Military Region'

NC1503083591 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0530 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Dubayy, 14 Mar (WAKH)—Some of the Armed Forces from the central military region that took part in the liberation of Kuwait returned to the United Arab Emirates [UAE] today. [passage omitted]

Opposition Radio Claims U.S. 'Advance' in Iraq

NC1903084891 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 0724 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Mujahidin's (?tribal) sources reported that the U.S. forces continue their advance from several axes in Iraq without meeting any resistance from the regime's forces. The U.S. forces enter [Iraqi] Army camps and take weapons from Iraqi (?soldiers) and officers.

Reactions to Saddam's 16 Mar Remarks Reported

'New National Phase' Hailed

NC1803192791 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1600 GMT 18 Mar 91

[18 March AL-JUMHURIYAH editorial: "On the Threshold of the New National Phase"]

[Text] The glad tidings conveyed by leader President Saddam Husayn when he announced a new program for a new national phase in great Iraq epitomizes great faith in the unity of Iraq's land, people, will and choice, strong self-confidence, firm resolve, strong and cohesive determination, and enlightened and sincere solidarity between the wise Iraqi leadership and the faithful Iraqi people. This is because this program, as explained by the leader, presents an image of the future we seek to build and embodies the outcome of the protracted national struggle and the great national construction endeavor baptized by the sweat of persistent efforts and by the blood of great sacrifices offered by our great people in various walks of life. Similarly, all this has been embodied in a lofty edifice and in the valiant defense of this strong edifice.

All that Iraq—its leadership, people, and Army—has offered and all the sacrifices the Iraqis have made in their various positions and through the various roles they have played since the inception of the great July revolution confirm the significance of this faith, this confidence, and this determination. All this also confirms the success of the sincere national will under the most difficult test and the cruelest circumstances. This also confirms the close relationship between the leadership and the people, the sincere affiliation to our beloved Iraq, and the sincere efforts made to build it.

The most difficult test and the cruelest conditions faced by the new Iraq with firmness and steadfastness—the aggressive imperialist-Atlantic-Zionist war—have not only been an arena of confrontation in the political, military, and economic spheres, but they have also provided an opportunity to examine various ways of life. The result of this examination is in favor of all that is nationalistic, noble, and constructive, God be praised.

It is high time to launch this new national phase firmly, now that the demarcation of trenches is clear and a full understanding of all aspects of life in Iraq has emerged. Consequently, it has become incumbent on every honorable and noble Iraqi to recognize that this phase launched by our unique leader Saddam Husayn is one in which all Iraqis should exert unprecedented efforts. All Iraqis should make clear and tangible efforts in our new life, either in the field of construction, in efforts to achieve stability, or in political, social, and economic development through exercising the rights ensured to them by the constitutional provisions, the law, the institutions, and the multiparty system. Foremost among the tasks the Iraqis must accomplish is the realization of effective collective participation at all levels.

Genuine and clearly defined construction requires the efforts, energies, and active participation of all people in all walks of life. This is because what benefits the people will remain, while what is useless will sink without a trace. The higher this edifice rises, the more windows will be opened to the sun. This phrase can be taken literally and figuratively. Thus, the hearts, consciences, and minds will be nurtured by ever more light. This will promote development and prosperity and release new vital energy. This will also contribute to the eternal process of renewal and regeneration. Only in this way will we all feel that we have given our new life its due and that we are worthy of leading this life, just as we are worthy of living in our great Iraq, with its ancient history as the home of civilizations that have benefited all mankind. In this way, we will be able to feel Iraq's great role, which is the outcome of the interaction of our actions, our capabilities, and the capabilites of our chaste land which is rich and full of resources.

Let the talented Iraqis launch their new national phase with confidence, boldness, and effectiveness so that they can guarantee their bright present and win their future under the large tent of an Iraq whose roots go deep, the tent of dignity and a secure and stable life.

Opposition Leader Rejects Proposals

NC1703180091 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1715 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Text] Damascus, 17 Mar (SANA)—Ayatollah al-Mudarrisi, leader of the Islamic Action Organization in Iraq, has stated that yesterday's speech by the head of the Iraqi regime was the speech of a man defeated in war and disowned by the masses of the Iraqi people, a man who is in his political death throes and who can no longer deceive anyone.

In a statement issued here today, al-Mudarrisi said that the claim by the Iraqi regime's head to have crushed the uprising in southern Iraq is but another of his countless lies. He was talking about victory as he was reaping defeat. He was talking about construction as he was forcing the Iraqis back to the Middle Ages. He added: After having drowned the country in blood and having brought destruction and ruin on it, we expected the head of the Iraqi regime to stand before the Iraqi masses, who are waging an heroic uprising against him, to express repentance and to resign from the presidency where he had installed himself by force of arms. But instead of

this, he came out to accuse the majority of Iraqis of adopting false identities and infiltrating the country.

Al-Mudarrisi stressed that Saddam Husayn has not attempted to unite the Iraqis, as he tried to insinuate, but has instead tried to set them against one another and erase their personality. The uprising shows his failure to do so.

Al-Mudarrisi called on Saddam Husayn to relinquish power and leave because he is the real issue of conflict in Iraq between the masses and the regime. He stressed that the proposals Saddam announced in his speech will not save him from his fate, noting that Saddam's history and practices have nothing to do with Iraq.

Regarding Saddam's promises of democracy, al-Mudarrisi said: The Iraqis have chosen their way and are now expressing their rejection of the Saddam regime through their uprising. Why does he not submit to their will? Al-Mudarrisi challenged Saddam to hold a referendum on his rule so that he can see that not even 20 people in Iraq want him to stay in power. He said that these false promises are only blatant political lies that do not deceive anyone because the Iraqis are demanding the departure of the dictator and an end to dictatorship.

Regarding Saddam's talk about a treaty on nonintervention in internal affairs and cooperation with the Arab countries, al- Mudarrisi said: The world has not yet forgotten Saddam's occupation of Kuwait, which was liberated less than two weeks ago. Saddam does not have good relations with any neighboring country.

In conclusion, al-Mudarrisi stressed that Saddam no longer has any role to play in Iraq; the key role now lies with the masses who are looking to salvation from his tyranny.

Opposition Radio Outlines Demands for Saddam

LD1803213191 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Iraq in Arabic 1200 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Commentary by Shukri Salih Zaki]

[Text] Honorable listeners, we greet you and present to you an appeal by Mr. Shukri Salih Zaki, former finance and education minister and the official spokesman of the Iraqi National Accord Group [Hay'at al-Wifaq al-Watani al-Iraqi]:

[Salih Zaki] O people of Iraq struggling for their freedom and dignity, O sons of the Iraqi Army jealous over the life of their countrymen, following the submissive and humiliating surrender with which the battle of the mother of defeat and ruin has ended, the criminal tyrant intended to say to the Iraqis and to the whole world: I am still here, alive and well. I still have enough power to strike the Iraqi people who doubt my leadership, express dissatisfaction and rebel because my failed adventures resulted in the death of hundreds of thousands of them, and dare to show dissatisfaction and criticism for the destruction which befell Iraq and brought the Iraqis back to the living conditions of the Middle Ages.

To absorb the popular dissatisfaction of him and his rotten and criminal regime, the tyrant has promised a new government, a new parliament and a political and democratic openness that will ensure freedom of opinion, expression, political and party multiplicity, and so on and so forth. These are hollow promises. We ask: How can the Iraqi people, who suffered horribly from the crimes of the tyrant and his regime, believe these hollow promises? The Iraqi people will never forget that the ruling gang in Baghdad issued a temporary Constitution in 1974 which stipulated full democratic freedoms. In practice, however, the Iraqi citizen was denied even the right to live.

In the shadow of that false Constitution, an atmosphere of oppression, terror, and murder prevailed in Iraq, the like of which has not been seen in the history of any country. The Iraqi people will not forget the false promises of the tyrant and his aides following the end of the senseless war with Iran, about the announcement of a permanent Constitution to ensure political and party multiplicity, and the promise to put that Constitution to a public referendum. The outcome was the catastrophic invasion of Kuwait and the resulting massive destruction in Iraq, which can not be repaired in less than 50 years.

We say to the criminal tyrant: If you want to give your promises even a small measure of credibility, then you have to do the following: first, dismantle all security, civil, and military intelligence agencies; special and public. Second, arrest all those who took part in the torture and death of thousands of innocent people, bring them to just trials under the supervision of the United Nations Organization. Third, disband the Republican Guard which has become a tool of oppression against the people; a task which has no connection with the tradition of the Iraqi Army. Fourth, abolish all laws, decrees and orders which have allowed your relatives and favorites to acquire huge amounts of wealth and privileges, and return the country's stolen wealth to the state budget.

Fifth, consider null and void all sentences passed by the revolution court and the special courts on innocent people, and state, personally, the invalidity of those sentences and admit that they were false and unjust. Sixth, pass a law by which you undertake to compensate all those who sustained damages during the rule of the gang that you head.

Seventh and finally, abolish all security restrictions and arrangements which surround you. You must walk in the streets of Baghdad without being surrounded by the henchmen of the security and the intelligence.

Once you do all of this, the people then might believe you and feel assured of your promises and might give you a last chance to repent your offenses and crimes.

Kurdistan Democratic Party Cables Support to Saddam

NC1703184491 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 17 Mar 91

["Text" of cable sent by the Political Bureau of the Kurdish Democratic Party to Iraqi President Saddam Husayn; place and date not given]

[Text] Struggling leader Saddam Husayn, may God protect and guide him: Under these circumstances, the imperialist powers and their agents are allying against our beloved [word indistinct] to inflict the gravest harm on it. The Bush-led criminal and unholy alliance of over 30 states, ranging from superpowers to traitors, have [word indistinct] its vile conspiracy to destroy our infrastructure which our people built with much sweat. Their ultimate goal was to destroy the high morale of our struggling people, who took an honorable stand in the face of that conspiracy, regardless of the great sacrifices involved.

[Words indistinct] after removing the consequences of the imperialist aggression, we see the traitors, the [word indistinct], and the agents who are accustomed to living on handouts from the foreigners' banquets, taking orders from their masters to put obstacles and hurdles in the way of the people and their nationalist powers and genuine [words indistinct].

These traitors and [word indistinct], who were used by the spiteful powers, are stirring up riots and disturbances [words indistinct] through falsifications and [words indistinct]. Those hired hands [passage indistinct] stood very firmly in the face of all the conspiracies hatched by imperialism and its agents and succeeded in thwarting all their attempts to sow sedition and division. This was possible through their deep faith and desire to preserve their gains and the accomplishments of the glorious 17 July revolution, which was led by the symbol leader and struggling president, Saddam Husayn, may God protect and guide him. They will continue to thwart all conspiracies and schemes, regardless of their source.

This people, who promised their leader to march ahead on the road of building the high edifice of civilization despite the conspiracies being hatched by imperialism and its agents, will remain loyal to their leader, homeland, principles, national unity, and territorial integrity regardless of the sacrifices entailed.

Our Kurdistan Democratic Party [al-hizb al-dimuqrati al-qurdistani] the [words indistinct] of our [word indistinct] people who stood by their rights under all circumstances and raised the banner of struggle behind your wise leadership will continue to raise this banner until all the aspirations and hopes of our Iraqi homeland and great people to build a free, independent, and democratic Iraq are realized. It is proud to be worthy of your trust in its nationalist stand.

The traitors who get their orders from foreigners will certainly fail in their attempts, no matter how they decorate these attempts with bright slogans, because the people have uncovered their real nature and will not let them escape unpunished. Glory to great Iraq and to the historic leader through whose efforts Iraq has achieved glory. May God grant you victory against the enemies.

Minister Visits Babil, Karbala' Officials

NC1903092391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0811 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Babil, 19 Mar (INA)—Tahir Muhammad Hassun al-Marzuq, minister of housing and reconstruction, has visited the governorates of Babil and Karbala'and met with the officials there.

The IRAQI NEWS AGENCY [INA] correspondent in Babil said that the minister of housing and reconstruction stressed the importance of using all the ministry's engineering and mechanical potential to repair the effects of sabotage and destruction caused by the mobs, agents, and traitors to the service departments and installations and the citizens' property in the governorate.

The minister told the INA correspondent in Karbala' Governorate that the ministry is currently preparing a comprehensive study to employ all its efforts to reconstruct what has been destroyed in the Iraqi towns and villages by the U.S.-Zionist-Atlantic aggression, as well as by the mobs and saboteurs.

Vice President Ma'ruf Receives Mauritanian Envoy

NC1703212591 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2050 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 17 Mar (INA)—Taha Muhyi-al-Din Ma'ruf, member of the Revolution Command Council and vice president, tonight received Mauritanian Interior Minister Cheikh Sid'Ahmed Ould Baba, Mauritanian President Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya's personal envoy to President Saddam Husayn.

The personal envoy delivered a verbal message to President Saddam Husayn from his brother the Mauritanian president, stressing Mauritania's solidarity with and support for the Iraqi people and leadership in the evil aggression against them.

Taha Muhyi-al-Din Ma'ruf expressed Iraq's gratitude to the Mauritanian president and people for their noble pan-Arab stand of solidarity with our people against the evil imperialist-Zionist aggression. The vice president also conveyed President Saddam Husayn's greetings to his brother President Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya and his wishes for glory and progress to the fraternal Mauritanian people.

The two officials reviewed developments in the Arab situation and the importance of strengthening Arab solidarity and joint action to confront the challenges of the coming stage.

The meeting was attended by Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister; the head of the Arab department at the Foreign Ministry; and the Mauritanian ambassador in Baghdad.

Ibrahim Meets Kurdish Tribal Chiefs in Al-Ta'mim

NC1703190691 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1745 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Text] Al-Ta'mim, northern Iraq, 17 Mar (INA)—Mr. 'Izzat Ibrahim, vice chairman of the Revolution Command Council [RCC], has met with a group of our Kurdish tribal chiefs.

During the meeting, which was held at the headquarters of the party's al-Ta'mim branch, Mr. Ibrahim told the audience: You represent a virtuous elite of our Iraqi people in general and our Kurdish people in particular. The men who are currently defending the homeland with high spirits and confidence represent Iraq's people, land, sky, and waters.

He added: With their built-in faithfulness to their homeland and leader, the good ones among our Kurdish people are able to ward off conspiracies against their region and cut off the hands of the deviant saboteurs who betrayed the homeland and principles and sold themselves out to foreigners.

Mr. 'Izzat Ibrahim said this homeland, on whose dear soil we live and with whose blessed waters we satisfy our thirst, calls upon us all to defend it and safeguard its dignity and pride by our money, our children, and our souls. No Iraqi can enjoy a dignified and sovereign life unless he lives in a homeland with safe soil, water, and air, he said.

The RCC vice chairman stressed that the heroic steadfastness of the Iraqis for eight months in the mother of battles was due to the good Iraqis' efforts, strong will, and high readiness to make sacrifices for the homeland and its leader. The Iraqis, including the Kurds, recorded an unprecedented historic victory that completed the victories scored by the glorious 17 March revolution through its march toward progress and development and its defeat of all the conspiracies on its way, Ibrahim said. These victories, he added, were entrenched by the power of our valiant army and the cohesion of the great Iraqi people, who wrote bright pages in Iraq's modern history.

Mr. Ibrahim called on all Kurdish people to take part in the battle of defense and construction waged by our country. He said: We do not want to leave any unused Kurdish potential without enabling it to win a good share in the honor of defending Iraq's cultural upsurge and continuous march.

The chiefs of the Kurdish tribes pledged to President Saddam Husayn to be faithful men, upholding the trust and continuing the march under the banner of God is Great, raised by victorious President Saddam Husayn. They pledged to be faithful soldiers, sacrificing every dear thing to safeguard the soil and unity of the dear homeland.

Ba'th Party Official Chairs Meeting in Maysan

NC1703163091 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1532 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Text] Comrade Samir Muhammad 'Abd-al-Wahhab, member of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party Regional Command, has met with party cadres and popular organizations in Maysan Governorate. They discussed ways to promote their effective struggling role in strengthening the construction march in great Iraq and in rebuilding what was destroyed by the treacherous Atlantic-Zionist aggression.

Addressing the meeting, the comrade member of the party regional command asserted that the burden of [word indistinct] at this stage is borne by the party strugglers and all good sons of great Iraq in building the present and illuminating the bright road of the future for coming generations. He said that the plot, which was concocted by all forces of evil and aggression, is aimed at wrecking Iraq's cultural structure, undermining the struggling spirit of the stalwart Iraqis, and dissolving Iraq's unity.

Comrade 'Abd-al-Wahhab went on to say that the next stage makes it incumbent upon the Iraqis to spare no efforts and to continue their sacrifices for the sake of serving great Iraq and building what was destroyed by the aggression.

The comrade member of the party regional command also met with the heads of the services deparments in the governorate and discussed with them ways to improve the services extended to citizens in accordance with the president leader's instructions. They also discussed the role being played by the services departments and the need to accelerate efforts to provide all kinds of services to the citizens.

The two meetings were attended by Maysan Governor 'Abd-al-Ilah Mahmud al-al-Mashhabani, Comrade Hamid al-Rawi, secretary of the Ba'th Party's Maysan Branch, and the comrade members of the party's branch.

Government Forces Employ Missiles, Napalm

15,000 Killed Karbala', Al-Najaf

NC1903134691 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 1230 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Reports say that approximately 500 bodies are still lying around in the streets of al-Basrah and that approximately 15,000 have been martyred by the barbaric and random shelling of the holy cities of Karbala' and al-Najaf by Saddam's troops. The shelling reached the holy sites of the imams, may peace be upon them.

Wide-scale clashes are taking place in the cities of northern Iraq between the opposition forces and the Baghdad government's troops. Reports indicate that the popular forces are launching massive campaigns against the government troops, inflicting heavy casualties upon them. The same reports say that the cities of al- Sulaymaniyah and Irbil are now completely out of the control of the government troops and that the city of Karkuk is also under the control of the opposition forces, after the government troops had been expelled. The government troops earlier used napalm and phosphorous bombs to shell the city, killing many of the Karkuk's inhabitants. [passage omitted]

Napalm Used on Citizens

NC1703170291 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1615 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Text] A spokesman for the Political Bureau of the Islamic al-Da'wah Party in Iraq has rebutted Iraq's claims that it has put out the fire of popular revolution in southern Iraq.

In a statement distributed in Damascus today, the spokesman said that these claims are groundless and that the popular revolution continues in southern, central, and northern Iraq. The spokesman invited media correspondents to visit the cities controlled by the popular revolution in Iraq. He added that the Iraqi regime dropped internationally banned napalm bombs on people fleeing the shelling on the main road between al-Najaf and Karbala'.

Kurdish Towns Hit With Missiles

LD1803181691 Tehran IRIB Television Network in Persian 1600 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] The popular forces repulsed a counterattack of the Ba'thist forces on the city of Tuz-Khurmatu, north of Iraq, and inflicted heavy losses on these forces. In the course of repulsing this counterattack, a large number of military troops joined the popular forces. Reports indicate that oil installations of Karkuk are under long-range artillery fire of the Ba'thist forces.

A member of the Iraqi opposition forces said today: Starting last night, the Iraqi forces opened a barrage of artillery and missile fire on five cities of Iraqi Kurdistan. On the basis of this report, the cities of (Kabari) and (Kelar), in the al-Sulaymaniyah Governorate; Khanaqin and Jalula, in the Diyala Governorate; Tuz-Khurmatu, in the Tikrit Governorate, and the Samut camp in al-Sulaymaniyah have been targets of Prague [as heard] and Katyusha missiles and artillery fire since 1800 yesterday.

Kurdish Spokesman Views Bombing

LD1803153191 Tehran IRNA in English 1418 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, Mar. 18 IRNA—The Iraqi Government bombarded five cities in its northeastern Kurdish populated areas at [time indistinct] Sunday using frog missiles, Katushya rockets and heavy guns.

According to a spokesman for Iraq's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) the bombardment of Klar, Kifri, Tuz Khurmatu, Khanaqin, Jalula, and the Samud Kurdish camp west of Klar, continued well until Monday evening inflicting heavy casualties and material damage and forcing families to flee their their homes.

The PUK spokesman added that the Iraqi Government has deployed four frog missile pads near Jalula which is used for shelling those cities and has moved 12 nine-metre long missiles to al-Sadiyah on the border between the Diyalah and Tamim province to bombard the cities held by the popular forces.

Violence, Mob Activity Taking Place in Cities

Al-Basrah Violence Cited

NC1803221391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2045 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 18 Mar (INA)—Baghdad television tonight aired an interview with one of the murderous criminals who tampered with the country's security and terrorized people.

The criminal, 'Ali Husayn Battur from al-Basrah Governorate, said that the criminal acts carried out by his clique and other cliques in al-Basrah Governorate included killing children and innocent people, destroying government buildings, and looting private shops.

He added that his clique released prisoners, held and killed a number of party comrades, and killed children whose fathers they could not find.

He indicated that police and municipality buildings have been attacked [words indistinct] and many military personnel have been killed because they refused to join their cliques.

He explained that his group carried out these acts in al-'Ashshar, al-Jaza'ir, the old market of al-Basrah, and Dakhilah. He said similar acts were also carried out at training hospitals, in al-Basrah, and at the port.

He added that the only aim of all these acts is sabotage and to terrorize people.

Looting Reported in Babylon, Al-Najaf

NC1803194791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1850 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Babil, 18 Mar (INA)—Reports by the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY [INA] have uncovered the hideousness of the criminal acts being committed by the mobs of saboteurs in the Governorates of Babylon and al-Najaf. These acts reflect the hatred harbored for the revolution of Iraq and its loyal sons, the reports say.

Reports prepared by INA correspondents in the two governorates exposed the acts of terrorism and intimidation committed by the scoundrels who embarked on looting and robbing property, killing innocent children and women, and burning and plundering the property of the state and the people.

Among the institutions burned, looted, and sabotaged in Babylon Governorate were the central markets; the al-Rashid Bank, which distributes pensions to retired persons; the general company for grain trade; and the Iraqi company for processing and marketing dates; in addition to a number of commercial stores and groceries and citizens' homes.

The reports add that the hands of the mobs reached sacred places in the holy Governorate of al-Najaf, stealing the contents of the tombs of Imams 'Ali Ibn-Abu-Talib and Muslim Ibn-'Aqil. These mobs committed the most appalling and unjustifiable crimes and massacres against innocent citizens in the nave of the holy al-Haydari Mosque and carried out inhuman assaults on the custodians of the two holy tombs.

The sabotage extended also to schools, government departments, and commercial shops, jewelry stores, groceries, and individual property.

Interviewed by INA correspondents in the two governorates, the citizens described such acts as shameful, criminal acts which have no relation whatsoever with tolerant Islamic principles, which these marauders are using as a cover.

'Riotous Acts' in Al-Najaf Viewed

NC1703191991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1824 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 17 Mar (INA)—Muhammad Muhammad Sadiq al-Sadr, an 'allamah in holy al-Najaf, has affirmed that the riotous acts which took place in al-Najaf were carried out by unknown mobs with no affiliation or social status.

In an interview aired over Baghdad Television tonight, al-Sadr said that those mobs are alien to the al-Najaf residents. They came from here and there in an attempt to devastate the town, loot and plunder, and set fire to government buildings and cars. These acts, he added, run counter to Islamic law and heavenly values.

In the interview, al-Sadr went on to say that those saboteurs and thugs are trying to hide behind Islam and its heavenly teachings, but Islam has nothing to do with their disgraceful deeds, which contradict Islamic teachings.

He stressed that the Iraqi media should expose the foreign press' lies and false claims by disclosing the criminal acts and chaos brought about by the mobs in Iraqi cities and that all these deeds are denounced and run counter to Islamic law.

At the interview's conclusion, Muhammad Sadiq al-Sadr implored God Almighty to grant success to the leadership of President Saddam Husayn in restoring security and stability and in building the devastated areas in al-Najaf and other Iraqi towns.

'Criminal Mobs' Active in Karbala'

NC1803192391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1828 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Karbala', 18 Mar (INA)—The sinful hands of the criminal, rancorous, and demagogic cliques have reached the Trade Ministry's stores and silos as well as places of worship, mosques, tombs of virtuous imams, public institutions, and property and shops owned by common citizens.

In a tour of Karbala' Governorate today, the INA team witnessed the acts of the criminal mobs, who directly and deliberately looted all foodstuffs and baby milk at the stores of the Trade Ministry departments and burnt what they could not loot.

The team toured the governorate's silo, which was fully looted. The silo's stores and equipment were burned and its machines were destroyed. Commodities and stored materials at the central markets, which constitute the governorate's strategic reserves, were stolen. Moreover, the saboteurs set fire to all documents, instruments, and equipment, and smashed the doors and windows of the governorate's central market. They looted all contents of the market, and because it was difficult to move the furniture, they set fire to it. They did the same to foodstuffs, construction material, automobile parts, and children's milk.

Through these acts, the criminal mobs showed how much they hate Iraq and its upsurge, and the welfare of the Iraqis that owes to the wise leadership of mujahid leader President Saddam Husayn.

Committees To Assess Damage

NC1803194991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1805 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Babil, 18 Mar (INA)—It was announced here today that several committees have been established to assess the damages mobs and agents have inflicted on holy places, religious tombs, and mosques in holy al-Najaf, Karabala', al-Basrah, Maysan, Dhi Qar, and Wasit Governorates. During a meeting with the director

of al-Furat Awqaf Directorate today, Minister of Awqaf and Religious Affairs 'Abdallah Fadil explained that the committees will assess the extent of the damage and will act swiftly to rebuild and rehabilitate what the criminals have destroyed in the chaste and holy land of Iraq.

He said that the crimes committed by the mobs and agents of colonialism did not spare mosques and tombs, which were hit by bullets and had their gates broken and their windows shattered. He said these crimes included the stealing of awqaf funds and the furniture of the Awqaf Directorate.

He explained that these acts are evidence of the rancor and evil harbored by those murderous criminals and agents of the foreigners, who showed no respect for the sanctity of mosques, but instead unleased their hatred against all human and religious values.

Workers at religious institutes at the al-Furat Awqaf Directorate who attended the meeting reiterated their pledge of affection and loyalty to President Saddam Husayn. They reiterated that they would stand behind the president to defeat the aggressors and to remain as unsheathed swords to defend Iraq and its territory and holy places.

Republican Guards Unleash 'Terror'

LD1703154291 Tehran IRNA in English 1428 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Text] Ahvaz (Khuzestan), Mar. 17, IRNA—Fierce clashes continue to rage in the southern Iraqi cities of Abu al-Khasib and al-Zubayr between the popular forces and the heavily armed Republican Guards, who according to reports have unleashed a "rein of terror" in al-Basrah Governorate. The guards have reportedly gained control of parts of al-Zubayr and Abu al-Khasib in the seesaw struggle.

Mahmoud Abdul-Hamid from al-Zubayr who crossed into Iran Saturday told IRNA that despite the military blockade, the rising Iraqi people have succeeded in entering the two cities "to defend their home and hearth." He also reported fierce clashes around al-Tannumah between the popular forces and the pro-government army units for control of the [word indistinct] town. "Pro-government forces have stepped up their attacks on people in the southern cities using destructive weapons such as napalm bombs," added Abdul-Hamid. [words indistinct] spoke of "inhuman tactics" by the Republic Guards "who are resorting to every crime against the citizens and have orders from Saddam (Husayn) to use chemical bombs."

With tears streaming down his cheeks, Salah Abdul-Rahim lamented to IRNA about the "bitter plight" of the Iraqi people, and appealed to international bodies to "condemn Saddam for his growing crimes."

He said "We have reports that Saddam has used chemicals against the people in Baghdad who are fed up with his rule." He disclosed that pro-government forces unable to face the "determined masses" have taken local citizens as hostages and are "mainly using them as human shields by forcing them to sit on tanks or sleep beside them."

According to Abdul-Rahim, most Iraqi military forces including some units of the Republican Guards have surrendered to the popular forces, and only "some hardcore units of the guards are trying to save Saddam."

Reports from Karkuk in the northeast indicate fresh gains for the popular forces, with the noose being tightened around the government forces in the city itself.

Refugees arriving in Sanandaj, western Iran, this morning spoke of a shortage of foodstuffs and medicines. They said that popular forces shot down an Iraqi plane in the Kelar [name as received] region in northeast Iraq, and the pilot was killed while trying to eject.

Rebel Radio Urges Military To Join Revolt

NC1503195491 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1835 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Text] Call. Call. Call. Call to the Iraqi Army. O sons of the Iraqi Army, O officers and soldiers: We address you today in the midst of an overwhelming popular revolt. We remind you of what Saddam did to you in his war against Kuwait. Saddam has used you as an instrument of aggression and hegemony against others without thinking about the consequences. He sent you to Kuwait when your numbers and equipment were of a high standard and then he pulled you out of it after you were torn apart at the hands of the Americans and their supporters.

Saddam has used you as a dummy that he manipulated according to his whims. He has brought on you a lasting mark of shame when he offered you as an easy prey to the ravens of America and other scoundrels. He brought sadness, misery, and sorrow into every one of your homes.

After all this, Saddam is perpetrating new follies and is asking you to point your guns at the chests of the sons of your own people who have risen up against the tyrant to erase the shame that Saddam has brought upon Iraq's Army, people, values, and principles.

The zeal of the grandsons of the revolutionaries of the 1920's will never tolerate the shame that Saddam has brought on Iraq. Will your zeal allow you to point your weapons against your rebelling kinsfolk? Will your sense of dignity allow you to obey Saddam in his defeat before the Americans and to stand in the face of your people who have rebelled for the sake of your own dignity? No, a thousand times no.

What you, officers and men, are required to do is to avenge your dignity and join the ranks of the revolutionaries to topple this criminal tyrant and failed leader. Hurrah to those free men, officers, troops, and noncommissioned officers who have joined the revolutionaries

with all their weapons. They now stand side by side and are advancing on the Saddamist dens to seize the conceited and obstinate ones and restore stolen dignity and lost liberty.

I will carry my soul on the palm of my hand and cast it into the abyss of death. For I will either live a life that pleases the friend or die a death that dismays the enemy. [verses of poetry]

Successes Against Pro-Saddam Forces Detailed

NC1503204791 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1800 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Text] Our struggling revolutionaries have waged a fierce battle against the pro-Saddam forces and stopped their advance on the al-Zubayr-al-Basrah axis. Our revolutionaries succeeded in destroying 15 tanks of some remnants of the Republican Guard, which supports the defeated tyrant. The Iraqi authority forces are trying to advance on the liberated areas in al-Basrah using armored forces, but were confronted with the steadfastness of the revolutionaries who are using all types of weapons to destroy the remnants of these forces which are hostile to the people.

In another important development in the growing popular revolution operations inside Iraq, the city of Mosul, the third largest Iraqi city, has fallen into the hands of the rebellious inhabitants following several days of demonstrations and clashes with Saddam's shaken cliques. Honest military men and inhabitants joined forces under the leadership of certain notables and shaykhs to extricate Mosul from Saddam's authority. The fall of Mosul into the hands of the popular revolution constitutes a coup de grace to the regime that is trying to portray our people's revolution as confined to Kurdistan, the southern area, and the central area south of Baghdad. It is worth noting that Mosul is important in terms of geography, politics, and poulation. Meanwhile, the city of Kirkuk is expected to fall to the popular revolution so that northern Iraq will be in the hands of our rebellious people.

The popular revolution in Dahuk succeeded in tearing apart the pro-Saddam remnants and liberating the city from their control. Thus, Dahuk, Iraq's northern gate, joins the list of the liberated cities. Saddam's authority is diminishing by the hour and our people are imposing their control of their resources in the liberated areas.

The popular revolution has spread north of the Diyala Governorate and the revolutionaries succeeded in imposing their control on the Jalula-Klar axis [words indistinct] important road in the region that links Iraq's central areas with the northern areas. In the operation to liberate the Jalula-Klar, our revolutionaries destroyed a tank battalion and captured a number of tanks. The commander of the battalion and his assistant were killed after refusing to disavow loyalty to criminal Saddam.

The pro-Saddam forces were dealt a new ('blow) when the masses imposed their control on large areas of Kurdistan and in the latest attacks, they liberated the cities of Harir, ('Abrah), Tartan, Zakho, ('Ziqan), Batufah, [name indistinct] and a dozen other towns in the Governorates of al-Sulaymaniyah, Irbil, and Dahuk. The revolutionaries succeeded in releasing 400 prisoners from the shackles of Saddam oppression. Jubilation sweeps the masses in our beloved northern Iraq in the wake of the collapse of the authority of Saddam's regime and restoration of their freedom in that region.

In the meantime, despite the intensive efforts exerted by Saddam's supporters to control the army and drive it to quell the popular revolution, border guard Brigade 802 joined the popular revolution with all its command, centers, and personnel, who number over 2,000. They refused to open fire on the defenseless rebellious people. The officers and soldiers were received warmly by the masses, who lauded this courageous step and appreciated their living conscience and affiliation to the people and the soil of the homeland.

The national defense regiments that Saddam formed to protect his regime in the northern areas continued to join the popular revolution. Four light regiments joined the popular revolution. However, a commander of one of these regiments [name indistinct] tried to resist the revolution, and met his just retribution at the hands of the masses.

Rebels Report Control Over Several Areas

Al-Kut, Jabbar Taken

NC1703044691 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1930 GMT 16 Mar 91

[Text] The masses of the popular revolution have taken control of the towns of al-Kut and Jabbar, after having earlier liberated the towns of Badrah and Zurbatiyah. According to reports, the town of Mandali in the Diyala Governorate is also the scene of confrontations between the inhabitants and forces loyal to the defeated despot.

Radio Reports Karkuk Captured

LD1903103591 Tehran IRNA in English 1049 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Bakhtaran, March 19, IRNA—The oil-rich city of Karkuk in northeastern Iraq fell into the hands of the Iraqi opposition forces Tuesday morning, announced radio of the Patriotic Union of the Iraqi Kurdistan monitored in this western province at 06:00 GMT.

The radio added that the armed popular forces have taken over major establishments in the Kurdish-populated city of Karkuk. The popular forces are presently cleaning the city of the remaining Ba'thist forces, it added.

Meanwhile, 17 Ba'thist officers have been killed and 23 others injured in their attack on the city of Tuz Khurmatu last Sunday, the same radio in a separate report monitored in Tehran announced Tuesday giving names of officers killed. According to the radio, severe clashes between the popular forces and the pro-government forces still continue.

Another report broadcast in the same radio said that the Ba'thist forces shelled Karkuk and its surrounding areas by napalm and phosphorus bombs from Monday noon till Tuesday morning as a result of which a number of residents were martyred.

The Ba'thist regime has also deployed earth to earth Frog missiles against the cities of Kifri, Klar, Khanaqin, Tuz Khurmatu and Jalula and Hamud camp while severe clashes are going on between the Ba'thist army and the popular forces in all these cities, the report added. The Iraqi regime has also installed al-Husayn ground to ground missile launchers in al-Mansuriyah region in Diyala Governorate deploying them against the cities of al-Sulaymaniyah, Chamchal [name as received], Darbandikhan and Irbil, it said.

Jalula Citizens Rebel, Seize Town

NC1903084491 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 0724 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] The people of Jalula have rebelled and succeeded in taking over the entire town. The city is now completely under the control of the population.

Spokesman on Control of Kurdish Areas

NC1903094191 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0630 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Iraq's ruling regime has committed further crimes in a bid to crush the Iraqi people's uprising. Since yesterday, five northeastern cities have been coming under missile and long-range artillery attacks.

An official spokesman for the Iraqi opposition said Khanaqin, Mandali, and Jalula in the Diyali Governorate and other areas in the al-Sulaymaniyah Governorate have come under intensive shelling leading to heavy loss of life among civilians.

The barbaric shelling follows setbacks suffered by the government forces at the hands of the popular forces. The government forces, added the spokesman, have sustained big losses in equipment, and have lost 50 soldiers. In al-Kut Governorate, opposition forces beat back government forces from the city, and shot down two helicopters. [passage omitted]

Jalal Talbani, a Kurdish leader, has asserted that 95 percent of the Kurdish areas in northern Iraq are now under the control of the the popular forces.

Tehran TV Cites Refugees on Continued Fighting

LD1803175291 Tehran IRIB Television Network in Persian 1600 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Iraqi refugees arriving in Iran announced that the forces of 'Abbas Bin 'Ali, peace be upon him, which are part of the popular forces in al-Kut, downed two helicopters of the Ba'thists yesterday. A number of civilians in Karbala have sought refuge in al-Najaf to protect themselves against the tank and artillery fire of the Republican Guard forces.

REUTER news agency reports indicate that mustard gas is being used against the Muslim demonstrators in al-Najaf and al-'Amarah. The Ba'thist forces have also deployed napalm bombs to suppress the people's uprising in al-Basrah, Qurnah, and Haniyah.

Intense fighting between the popular forces and Republican Guards of Iraq also continues inside the Iraqi town of al-Nasiriyah. A number of Iraqi refugees, who arrived in Iran yesterday, told IRNA that the Iraqi forces, by continuously shelling al-Nasiriyah, try to free the city center from control of the popular forces; but so far they have not had much success. The same report indicates that during the shelling of the Iraqi forces, a large number of inhabitants of al-Nasiriyah were either killed or wounded.

Another Iraqi refugee, named Yusef Ubayd, who arrived in Iran from al-Amarah last night, said: The city of al-'Amarah, in the Missan province, was taken by the popular forces and the Iraqi mujahedin; and since the Iraqi mujahedin have cut off the al-Kut to al-Amarah highway, the Iraqi troops cannot enter al-'Amarah. He added: The popular forces are currently stationed on the al-Kut-al-'Amarah highway and prevent dispatch of reinforcements from Baghdad to al-'Amarah. [passage omitted]

Revolutionary Muslims, Republican Guards Clash

LD1803124791 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] The uprising of the Muslim Iraqi people against the Ba'thist regime is still continuing and, despite Saddam's orders for the suppression of the popular forces, a number of towns in that country continue to be the scene of bloody clashes between revolutionary Muslims and Iraq's Republican Guards.

According to IRNA, Iraqis who have taken refuge in Iran in the course of yesterday and today have said that the town of 'Ali al-Gharbi, 'Ali al-Sharqi and Shaykh Sa'd are out of the control of the Ba'thist forces. Popular demonstrations have also encompassed the town of Shatt al-Kufah.

According to IRNA from Bakhtaran, despite the dispatch of Republican Guards to Shatt al-Kufah for the suppression of demonstrations, clashes between popular and government forces are continuing in the town.

According to one Iraqi refugee, the 97th Brigade of the Republican Guards sustained heavy casualties and damage in the clashes and was forced to retreat. He added: Iraqi protesters have also inflicted damage and casualties on the Iraqi regime's forces on the axes of al-Divaniyyah, al-Hillah, and al-Hillah Hamzah al-Gharbi situated in the province of Babil. This Iraqi refugee said: Clashes between popular and government forces in the Kut region are continuing today.

'Fierce Fighting' Continues; Rebels Seize City

LD1803123391 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] According to the latest reports from Ahvaz, fierce fighting is still in progress between the popular forces and the Iraqi Republican Guards in the center of al-Nasirayah in Iraq's Dhiqar Governorate. A number of Iraqi refugees who arrived in Iran yesterday announced this in an interview with an IRNA correspondent. They added: The Iraqi Ba'thist forces, by deploying heavy artillery and continuous shelling of that town, are attempting to take control of the center of the town of al-Nasiriyah from the opponents of Saddam, but so far their attempts have met with failure. According to the same report, a great number of that town's citizens were martyred or injured in the course of the shelling of al-Nasiriyah by the Iraqi forces. One of the Iraqi refugees who arrived in Iran from al-'Amarah last night said: The town of al-'Amarah in the province of Maysan has also been taken over by the popular forces and the Iraqi mujahedin. The Iraqi forces are unable to enter that town since the Iraqi mujahedin have blocked the al-Kut-al-'Amarah highway. The Iraqi refugee added: With the blocking of the al-Kut-al-'Amarah highway, and thus the prevention of the Iraqi forces' advance toward the town of al-'Marah, the fighting between the popular forces and the Iraqi military forces in the town of al-Hurnah and the towns of al-Ozay and al-Kahla in the governorate of Maysan has lost intensity.

One of the citizens of the town of al-Tannumah in Iraq who took refuge in Iran last night said: This town is now in the hands of the popular forces, despite efforts by the Iraqi forces to take over the control of that town and the towns of al-Zubayr and Abu al-Khasib from the popular forces. The same Iraqi refugee added: A number of the citizens from the town of al-Tannumah, including a number of women and children, were injured as a result of napalm bombs yesterday.

The Iraqi opposition sources announced: The Iraqi regime's forces have launched an attack on the towns of Tuz, (Hormatoh), and Karkuk, from five directions, and martyred a number of people by using a 950 kg napalm bomb and missiles. According to IRNA citing these sources, the inhabitants of these regions managed to withstand the Iraqi regime's onslaught by suffering a number of martyrdoms and injuries. They killed a number of the Iraqi regime's forces. According to the same report, the town of Kallar also came under the Iraqi regime's artillery attack last night.

Paper Warns of 'Punishment' for 'Agent' Forces

NC1803153691 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1159 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Editorial in 18 March AL-THAWRAH: "Crushing and Uprooting the Sedition"]

[Text] While Iraq and [word indistinct] was being attacked by the imperialist-Atlantic-Zionist alliance, [words indistinct] subjected to another invasion [words indistinct] into the country from abroad [words indistinct] in a number of our Iraqi cities and villages. They raised slogans of abhorrent sectarian sedition and division. These renegades and mobs and their supporters (?raided) Army units and barracks, captured weapons and equipment, burned people's property, looted public offices, and killed innocent officials, officers, and common citizens.

The acts and crimes perpetrated by these criminals clearly reveal their true nature as agents for the foreigners who are seeking to weaken Iraq and its valiant Armed Forces. Their motives are nothing but hatred, treachery, and treason. The enemy attempt to portray the crimes and brutal acts perpetrated by these traitors as a popular uprising aimed at changing the government is a losing and totally exposed attempt that can mislead no honorable citizen.

Does nationalism or democracy mean dividing Iraq and turning it into small belligerent units? Has Iraq ever been a (?state) for a single sect or group to be accused of sectarianism and threatened with revenge? Genuine Iraqis know full well and concretely feel that the regime of the July revolution, which led Iraq for more than 20 years toward progress and development and which sincerely served its people and scored all these historic gains and achievements, has never been a regime of a single sect, and that the leadership of the party and the revolution, at the top of which is mujahid leader Saddam Husayn, has never represented a single Iraqi sect or group. This is a plan designed abroad, aimed at destroying, dividing, and turning Iraq into another Lebanon.

To confront this sedition, the leadership of the party and the revolution had to rise up despite all the difficult circumstances and the wounds caused by the brutal aggression. It had to rise up to protect great Iraq from the crimes and evil acts of this rancorous (?herd) and to restore security, stability, and reassurance to the innocent people. The zealous Iraqis, the Armed Forces, and the security and police agencies managed in a few days to crush this sedition, bring [words indistinct] throughout Iraq, and bring things back to normal.

As in all [words indistinct] in a number of our southern cities and villages, armed individuals coming from the same place entered a number of cities and villages in the north. They raised slogans of national secession and

perpetrated acts of murder, terrorism, arson, and looting. All their crimes serve one goal: striking at the heart of national unity. The saboteurs are not concerned about the Kurds' rights, interests, and (?aspirations) to security, stability, and [word indistinct]. On the other hand, the leadership of the party and revolution was and is still concerned about achieving these interests by (?entrenching) national unity and bolstering national cohesion among all sons of Iraq. This was done in practice through the issuance of the autonomy law in 1974 and the continuation of efforts to put it into effect.

These adventurists make a fatal mistake if they imagine they can, through these criminal and demagogic methods, achieve what they failed to achieve at earlier stages. For all the heavy losses and destruction it suffered, Iraq is still strong and firm, able not only to handle the repercussions of the aggression, but to foil all the suspect and malevolent schemes and to defeat all those who are thinking about sedition and national division in our beloved north.

Just like the good Iraqis crushed the sedition in the south, they are determined to eradicate all remaining roots of treason and [word indistinct] in the north. Brave Iraqis will challenge and fight the traitors and agents who threaten Iraq's unity, sovereignty, and national independence.

History has proven that every Kurdish movement affiliated with or depending on foreigners has failed to achieve anything for our Kurdish people and only brought destruction to them. This is precisely what happened to the adventure of Mustafa al-Barzani between 1970 and 1975. Certainly, the fate of these agent saboteurs, who are playing the same role and game, will be exactly the same as that of their traitorous and hireling predecessors.

We know our people very well and we have limitless confidence in their awareness, nationalism, and [words indistinct]. We are fully reassured that our people are standing against these agents who sold out their honor and the values and principles of the [words indistinct], who opted for treachery, treason, and rancor, and who helped spread destruction and [word indistinct]. We also know that these persons remain isolated individuals; they alone deserve severe punishment for the sins they perpetrated against great Iraq and its united, steadfast, and brave people.

Karbala' Citizens View 'Sabotage,' Pledge Loyalty

NC1703215291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2040 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Baghdad, 17 Mar (INA)—A number of citizens from Karbala' Governorate have affirmed that the acts of violence some saboteurs carried out in Karbala' Governorate were intended to loot homes, attack citizens, and kill innocent people.

In interviews with the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY today, they added that the inhuman acts committed by a group of traitors, agents, and mercenaries have damaged the reputation of true Islam and its tolerant teachings and seek to distort the personality of the honorable Iraqi citizen.

Citizen Mahdi Fadil al-Gharabi, who lives in the city of Karbala' said that the mercenary traitors robbed and looted citizens' property and killed innocent children, contrary to the tolerant heavenly norms and values.

Citizen Fatimah 'Abbas, who works in a nursery in Karbala', clarified that the state of the citizens living in the governorate is now calm and stable after the men of leader Saddam Husayn eliminated a deluded handful of agents and thieves tampering with the state's property and finances.

Citizen Hisham Makki talked about the acts and damage caused by the saboteurs to the property of the state and citizens. They stole the property of citizens, burned their cars, killed their children, and attacked women. These acts are unacceptable to any honorable person.

Dr. Khudayr Wahid al-Murshidi, general manager for health in the Governorate of Karbala', clarified that the acts of sabotage which took place at al-Husayni Hospital were the result of bestial behavior by a spiteful group and included destroying the vital facilities and modern equipment.

He added that the saboteurs stole all the equipment and beds, and killed innocent patients, especially children and women, by decapitating them. [passage omitted]

The citizens of the governorate with whom INA met renewed their pledges of allegiance and loyalty to President Saddam Husayn, the symbol of Iraq and the Arab nation, to be his true soldiers of the dear homeland. They also expressed their readiness to offer themselves as martyrs to defend great Iraq. [passage omitted]

They pledged to be loyal soldiers to protect the accomplishments of the great revolution and to stand firm to confront all schemes and conspiracies which seek to harm Iraq.

Opposition Reportedly Forms 'Shadow Government'

NC1803213991 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 2100 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] An Iraqi opposition leader issued a decree today declaring the formation of a shadow government comprising eight ministers to cater to the daily needs of the Iraqis living in the areas now under the control of the revolutionaries. The decree urged all Iraqi rebels to follow the instructions issued by this government.

Opposition Forces Hold News Conference

NC1803192991 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1725 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Damascus, 18 Mar (SANA)—The Secretariat of the Joint Action Committee of the Iraqi Opposition held a news conference here today. The secretariat called on all Iraqi citizens, both inside and outside the country, who sympathize with the Iraqi people's cause and struggle for freedom and democracy to stand by the Iraqi people and this revolution and heroic uprising against Iraq's ruler and his despotic regime.

In the news conference, which was attended by Arab and international news agency correspondents, television networks, and newspapers, as well as press and media in Syria, the secretariat affirmed that the ruling regime in Baghdad, which refused to heed the voice of reason and plunged Iraq into a destructive war, is trying desperately to put down the uprising in Iraq with internationally banned means of killing and destruction.

The secretariat refuted claims by the Iraqi regime, particularly what has been uttered by Iraq's ruler, who claimed that the overwhelming popular revolution in the south and the north has been quelled and that he intends to achieve democracy and establish a constitution in Iraq.

Replying to reporters' questions, the secretariat noted the contradiction in the speech of the Iraqi leader, when he acknowledged that the popular uprising is still continuing.

The secretariat said that the popular uprising is developing day by day and will pursue its path of struggle until Iraq, its people, and the Arab nation have been saved from this regime.

The secretariat asserted that fierce clashes are now taking place between the Iraqi regime forces and the popular uprising forces and that Iraqi Army troops had joined the ranks of the Iraqi revolution and people.

The secretariat disclosed that the Iraqi regime's forces carried out three attacks and landed commandos in the Cities of (al-Thaniyah), Karbala', and al-Tannumah with the participation of more than 120 helicopters. Twenty-four hours later, however, these attacks were repulsed, and the Iraqi regime's forces gradually began to withdraw and abandon their positions. The Iraqi regime's forces and their garrison in al-Kut City in the south, 150 km away from Baghdad, surrendered to the uprising forces.

Answering a question on the opposition forces' future program and plans, the secretariat members said that, after its recent meeting in Lebanon, the Iraqi opposition will start to move and will dispatch delegations to several fraternal Arab and friendly foreign countries to secure support and to pursue its struggle to save the Iraqi people and our Arab nation from this regime.

The secretariat said that civilian committees are currently administering and defending the areas from which the regime's forces had been expelled and are attending to the people's needs. The uprising forces, the secretariat said, are expanding in the north and the south by the day and are consolidating their control, thanks to the thousands of Iraqi people and Iraqi Army personnel who joined this uprising.

The secretariat members said they welcome all Iraqis who are joining the uprising, especially the captured military personnel. The secretariat said that a date and location of their next news conference is unknown at this time.

Commenting on what the head of the Iraqi regime has been saying about implementing new reforms in Iraq, the secretariat emphasized that the head of the Iraqi regime's promises are not new, for he has been repeating them over and over the past few years. He has not, however, implemented any changes because democracy is the absolute opposite of the current regime's continuation in Iraq.

Schools, Teacher's Institutes To Reopen 23 Mar

NC1803153791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1500 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 18 Mar (INA)—Classes in kindergartens; elementary, intermediate, and secondary schools; teachers' institutes; and the Institute of Fine Arts will resume on Saturday, 23 March 1991.

In a statement issued today, the Ministry of Education urges students, teaching staff, and parents to observe the working hours, to ensure the orderly resumption of studies, and to use time in an exemplary way so that the students will absorb and understand all topics studied.

Shamir Rejects Baker Remarks on Annexation

TA1903065691 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 19 Mar 91 p 1

[Report by Knesset correspondent Asher Wallfish]

[Excerpts] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir yesterday rejected U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's definition of Israeli settlement in the territories as "de facto annexation".

When reporters asked Shamir outside the Knesset foreign affairs and defense committee about Baker's statement to TV interviewers in Washington this weekend, the premier said: "The U.S. has never said our settlements are illegal and it cannot say so. It cannot say that we have less right than the Arabs to settle there (in the territories).

"At Camp David, we committed ourselves not to annex the territories. We oppose annexation," he said.

Shamir said he did not consider the Palestinian figures who met with Baker last week at the U.S. Consulate as qualified to take part in a delegation to negotiate with Israel, under the terms of the government's May 1989 initiative. [passage omitted]

Turning to his conversation with Baker, Shamir said he had told the secretary of state that Israel could not be satisfied with the willingness of certain Arab leaders, whom Baker met on his tour, to edge closer to Israel.

"I told him they spoke in a personal vein, in a hesitant manner, and refused to voice this less negative attitude to their own followers. In the past, I said, such statements created the illusion that an arrangement might be worked out, but the illusion soon evaporated."

Shamir told the committee that in the months ahead the State Department would make efforts to transform the feelings expressed to Baker into political realities. "Only then shall we know whether there is anything to build on."

He said the peace process as envisaged in the government's May 1989 initiative could move forward if the Arab states altered their attitude towards Israel, ended the economic boycott and revoked the UN resolution equating Zionism with racism.

"Since the territories cannot be divided up geographically between us and the Palestinians, Camp David offers the only viable approach," he said. "I have the impression that in the U.S. and among the Arab States, people are now more attentive to that fact."

Shamir said Baker had come face to face during his visit with Israeli realities like aliya and the Holocaust, which all influenced him. "He was exposed to the reality of terrorism here. Terror is no longer just a dispatch on his desk," the premier said.

Shamir 'Opposed to' Palestinians Who Met Baker

TA1803152391 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1500 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir says that he is strongly opposed to the Palestinian dignitaries who met with James Baker and the EC representatives, and that they will be unable to represent the Palestinians in negotiations with Israel.

Speaking in a debate at the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, the prime minister said that he does not know who is more dangerous, Faysal al-Husayni or Yasir 'Arafat.

When several Alignment members pressed Mr. Shamir to specify with whom he is ready to negotiate, the prime minister replied that the Arab countries must seek out moderate representatives to replace the extremists who have led the Palestinians since the 1920's.

Our correspondent Ze'ev Kohen reports that speaking at the debate, Shim'on Peres said he would be willing to accept Israeli negotiations with the 10 Palestinians on whom Moshe Arens and James Baker had agreed in the past. The prime minister responded to this by saying that Moshe Arens had not agreed to the participation of Faysal al-Husayni.

Terms Delegates 'PLO People'

TA1903062491 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0505 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Report by Ze'ev Kohen]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] The Palestinian delegation that met with Baker during his visit to Israel is unacceptable to us, said the prime minister after the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee meeting:

[Begin Shamir recording] In my opinion, the delegates who met with Baker are PLO people, who came in the name of the PLO and express the PLO opinion. They are PLO people, and we determined in our principles—in the principles of the unity government, if you want to know—that Israel will not negotiate with the PLO. How can we conduct negotiations with the PLO? Also, the negotiations will be ineffective; we will reach no agreement with them. We can conduct negotiations for eternity, but there will be no results. [end recording]

Israeli sources stress that Faysal al-Husayni is considered a senior PLO representative in Israel, and his activities and ties with the PLO are well known. Arab countries must find moderate representatives to replace the extremists who have led the Palestinian public since the 1920's, say sources in Jerusalem.

The Jordanian concept of a Mediterranean defense organization is not new, having been conceived by Italy. It lacks pan-European consent, and Israel, too, will not consent to belonging to any body in which nonstate elements participate; the allusion is obviously to the PLO.

As for the chief of staff's remarks that a political settlement is more important than territory, because it contains both demilitarization and arms restriction, as well as factors aimed at reducing military dangers, political sources reacted by saying that Israel is taking action to achieve a political settlement which is undoubtedly important for its security. The sources refused, however, to argue publicly with a uniform-clad personality on whether a political settlement is more important than territory or vice versa. This argument is only beginning, and we are certain to hear more about it.

Shamir Says Resolution 242 Inapplicable to Golan

TA1803183291 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in English 1800 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Report by David Essing]

[Excerpt] Appearing before the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, Prime Minister Shamir made clear he was not happy with Ehud Olmert's statement. Shamir denied that Olmert had signaled a change in government policy on the Golan Heights, where Israeli law was applied 10 years ago.

[Begin recording] [Shamir] Well, I don't think he said it. He said that Syria, if it will come to the table of negotiations, Syria will have the right or it will be possible that Syria will ask something about its territorial demands. That's all. I don't think it was a happy expression. Our formula is that we want to have negotiations, direct negotiations, with all the Arab countries without any preconditions. Point.

[Essing] Is the Golan Heights a subject for negotiations?

[Shamir] The Golan Heights is not a subject for territorial negotiations.

[Essing] Does that mean that Resolution 242 does not apply to the Golan?

[Shamir] Resolution 242 has nothing to do with the Golan. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Shamir on Ethiopian Aliyah, Soviet Anti-Semitism

TA1803173891 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] The prime minister says that the Ethiopian Government has promised to renew the Jewish emigration, and that several hundred immigrants will arrive from Ethiopia this month. In a debate at the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, Yitzhaq Shamir said that Israel is very concerned about the domestic situation in Ethiopia and fears for the fate of the 15,000 Jews still living there.

Our correspondent Ze'ev Kohen reports that the prime minister told the committee that 26,000 immigrants have arrived from the Soviet Union since the beginning of the year. Mr. Shamir said that anti-Semitism is on the rise in the USSR, and it is apparently inflamed by pro-Arab elements.

Housing Ministry 'Determined' To Build in Golan

TA1903112791 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1100 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Minister Ari'el Sharon has very sharply attacked Chief of Staff Dan Shomron for the latter's remarks last night that a political settlement is preferable to territory. Sharon said that even before completing his term in office, Shomron has donned a politician's underwear.

On another issue, Minister Sharon said that his ministry is determined to build 1,200 new apartments in the Golan this year. [A similar report on Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 1105 GMT on 19 March adds that Sharon also said: "We are now in the process of building 1,200 housing units in the Golan Heights, and I hope next year we will build some 1,200 more."] According to him, this construction will be in accordance with a cabinet resolution and without the least consideration for any position expressed by the United States on the issue.

Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that Sharon made these observations during a tour of lower Galilee. [passage omitted]

Knesset Defeats No-Confidence Motions

TA1803173691 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] A short while ago the Knesset defeated the no-confidence motions submitted by opposition parties over the failures of immigrant absorption, soaring unemployment, and the closure imposed on the territories. The motion was opposed by 53 Knesset members and supported by 43.

Minister Ari'el Sharon, who replied on behalf of the government, said that this morning he heard the prime minister express regret over Minister Olmert's remarks in Washington and make an emphatic statement that Olmert's remarks did not reflect the government stand.

Minister Sharon announced that his ministry has prepared plans for the construction of 1,200 housing units in the Golan Heights and for increasing their Jewish population from 11,000 today to 20,000 by the end of the year.

Jerusalem Examining Plan To Demilitarize Golan

TA1903090091 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 19 Mar 91 p1

[Report by Avner Regev]

[Excerpts] In anticipation of continuing discussions with the United States on the political process, Jerusalem is now examining several ideas for interim arrangements, such as the possibility of creating a pattern of local

Palestinian leadership in the Gaza Strip that would enjoy the support of Egypt and Saudi Arabia, and bilateral demilitarization of the Golan Heights on both sides of the cease-fire line, under U.S. supervision. This was stated yesterday by senior political circles. [passage omitted]

The concept of bilaterally demilitarizing the Golan Heights does not involve the annulment of Israeli sovereignty, does not necessitate the evacuation of settlements and, according to the political circles, fits in with the proposal to act on the basis of parallel ladders, with each rung of the ladder representing a point for mutual concession up to the ultimate stage of a peace agreement. A proposal for action along these lines was presented to Baker during his visit to Israel.

Editorial Views Reaction to Olmert Golan Remark

TA1903110191 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 19 Mar 91 p 2

[Editorial: "Orchestrated Barks"]

[Text] Here is an exercise to familiarize oneself with Israeli politics on the eve of political negotiations. Let us decipher the affair of Minister Ehud Olmert's remark by using the method of elimination:

Was this a slip of the tongue? Not likely; Olmert, a shrewd attorney, read his speech from a written text, and deliberately stressed the remark concerning the Golan Heights. This was no accident.

Was this a trial balloon for Israeli public opinion? It is too early for that. There is no point in feeling out Israeli opinion when there is no Syrian readiness in sight and no feeling that peace is within reach.

Was this lip service to promote negotiations? Not very likely. It is obvious that denials in retrospect would eliminate the slightest hint of apparent moderation. Also, it is hard to assume that Shamir did not foresee the harsh reactions to Olmert's remark.

Was it a purposeful demonstration to the Americans? We are left with only this option. Based on the reasonable assumption that Shamir is an honest man and that there has been no change in his stand concerning the Golan Heights, it appears that the prime minister wished to show the Americans that his hands are tied on the home front and he has not even the possibility of holding negotiations on the Golan Heights. According to this option, the choir's barking was orchestrated and ordered. This is another elegant way to say "no" to the political initiative.

Herzog, Shamir's Office Request Pardon for Pollard

TA1503125491 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 15 Mar 91 p 5

[Report by Batya Feldman]

[Excerpt] President Hayim Herzog and the Prime Minister's Office have submitted requests to the U.S. Administration for a Presidential pardon for Jonathan Pollard. Deputy Minister Ge'ula Kohen, who heads the Israeli lobby, said that activities on behalf of Jonathan Pollard have increased over the last few months, since the beginning of the Gulf crisis. "During the last five years, all our efforts to get official U.S. and Israeli elements to take action for Jonathan were blocked. Ever since it became clear that the rudimentary information he had given out about Iraq's nonconventional weapons was vital and very important, we have been finding more willingness to help him," Kohen said. She added that he can only be released through a Presidential pardon.

According to her, activities on Pollard's behalf have moved to the official level in the last few months. The Prime Minister's Office, through Elyaqim Rubinstein and 'Azri'el Nevo, has been asking help from senators, congressmen, and senior administration officials. The visits of Lawrence Eagleburger and James Baker were also used to raise the issue.

Two days ago, Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu also stated that the Israeli Government intends to work for Pollard's release. [passage omitted]

Shomron on Future Battlefield, Borders, Intifadah

TA1703165691 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Report by Roni Sofer]

[Text] At a farewell ceremony for the chief of staff held today at the Southern Command, Lieutenant General Dan Shomron discussed the three issues that occupied him during his tenure: the battlefield of the future, the heating up of the borders, and the intifadah.

The central issue he addressed was the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] procurement and rearmament policy over the past few years. He asserted that, in the course of his term of office, the IDF had continued to build itself up to be prepared for the battlefield of the future.

[Begin Shomron recording] The very measures that during the Gulf war were discovered to be likely to play a dominant role in future wars are measures that the IDF has invested in over recent years, including sophisticated equipment—part of which remains classified. Those measures correspond precisely to the need for weapons that enable one to achieve a swift victory in war and with fewer casualties. [end recording]

The second issue the chief of staff commented on was the sealing of the borders during his tenure. Shomron pointed out that although the Jordanian border had recently heated up, attempts by terrorist squads to infiltrate had been foiled, and the terrorists who had managed to infiltrate were eliminated or captured in a short time.

[Begin Shomron recording] Today, Israeli society cannot countenance a successful infiltration even by one terrorist and even for a short time—and rightly so, because the IDF today is capable of effectively sealing off the borders. [end recording]

To wind things up, the chief of staff discussed the uprising in the territories, on account of which he will go into the history books as the chief of staff of the intifadah. Shomron said that the uprising severely strained the IDF's image. That is because heavy pressure was put on the IDF to swiftly quell it. The chief of staff explained that he had decided to adopt a more moderate and slow approach so as not to repeat the failure of the U.S. military in Vietnam. He asserted that quick action would have forced the IDF to operate in a manner contrary to the law and would have led to a sense of alienation between the Israeli people and the IDF.

Moda'i Expects Pressure To Pay Territory for Aid

TA1403101591 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 14 Mar 91

[Report by 'Ezra Yanuv]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Addressing a convention of members of his fledgling Party for the Advancement of the Zionist-Liberal Ideology In Israel in Ashdod last night, Finance Minister Yitzhaq Moda'i stressed that the euphoria experienced in the coalition countries was not evident in Israel because Israel did not take part in the victory over the Iraqi Army.

Moda'i said that we are not only being pressured to pay in territory for peace, but that we will pay in territory for aid. In his remarks, Moda'i settled his accounts with the Herut Party and stressed the legitimacy his party gave Herut in its rise to power. [passage omitted]

Shomron Discusses Postwar Situation, Settlement

TA1903062191 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0500 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Dan Shomron says that, although Iraq's military power has been significantly reduced, decreasing the immediate threat from an eastern front, Syria is continuing to build up its military might. Meeting with military reporters last night, Gen. Shomron, who ends his term of office next month, said Israel must also keep an eye on developments in Iran. More from reporter Alan Ben-'Ami:

The chief of staff said that the severe beating which the Iraqi Army has received, together with the weakened positions of Jordan and the PLO, have reduced the threat to Israel from an eastern front for the immediate future and provided opportunities for political processes, in which Israel finds itself in an easier situation.

At the same time he warned: Syria now finds itself without the strategic depth of Iraq and without the Soviet superpower umbrella. The Syrians, he said, maintain their suspicions, continue to build up their forces, and acquire additional weaponry, and still seek to achieve strategic parity with Israel.

In words reminiscent of military analysts talking about Iraq at the end of another Gulf war—against Iran—Gen. Shomron said Israel must pay attention to developments in Iran. What sort of Iran will we see in the future? What directions is it aiming at, he asked. Will it invest most of its resources in developing the country, or will it try again to export the Islamic revolution? While it is trying to build up its economic infrastructure, he said, Iran is also building its forces and acquiring weapons, including nonconventional ones.

The Gulf war, said Gen. Shomron, had clearly shown the important role of advanced weaponry and technological superiority on the battlefield, as well as in reducing casualties to one's own forces. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has already been investing in sophisticated weaponry for some time and made significant advances in its battle doctrine and weapons acquisition. But now, Arab countries, too, can be expected to learn lessons from the war. We must continue to stay one step ahead of them, said the chief of staff.

As to the importance of strategic depth in the missile era, Gen. Shomron said the principal threat to a country's survival was not from missiles, but rather from a combination of large ground and air forces and their offensive capabilities. Territory has great significance, if one is talking about states at war, Gen. Shomron continued, but a political settlement offers even more than territory, if it includes arrangements such as demilitarized areas, early warning systems, force reductions, and mutual inspection systems, all of which can lessen the dangers of conflict, said Gen. Shomron. [passage omitted]

Netherlands Patriot Battery To Return Home

TA1503153791 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1500 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Text] The Patriot missile battery the Netherlands sent to Israel will return to its country. This was decided by the Netherlands defense minister following consultations with Minister Arens. The visiting minister toured the battery, stationed near Jerusalem, today together with the Netherlands chief of staff and the Israeli Air Force commander. Major General Bin-Nun invited the soldiers manning the battery to stay in Jerusalem for a few days as the guests of the Israeli Air Force. This was reported by our correspondent Mor Suliman.

Arens Expresses Thanks

LD1503164291 Hilversum International Service in English 1130 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Text] Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Arens has expressed his deep respect for the Netherlands' military support to Israel during the Gulf war. Last month the

Netherlands sent a battery of Patriot missiles to Israel for that country's defense against Iraqi Scud missiles.

Speaking to Dutch Defense Minister Relus Ter Beek, who is paying an official visit to Israel, Mr. Arens said that Israel would not quickly forget Holland's gesture. Mr. Ter Beek pointed out that the sending of the Patriots should be seen as a political gesture. He added that Israel now knows who its real friends are.

First East Europe IDF Envoy Assigned to Prague

TA1803114591 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 18 Mar 91 p 1

[Report by Avi Bnayahu]

[Excerpt] The first IDF [Israel Defense Forces] attache to an East European country will shortly be assigned to Czechoslovakia, according to a recent agreement between the Israeli and Czechoslovak Governments. Over the weekend, the defense minister and the chief of staff approved the appointment of Colonel Yo'av Dayagi as the first IDF attache in Czechoslovakia and Eastern Europe. 'AL HAMISHMAR has learned that contacts on the issue lasted a few months, after the Czechoslovak Government, on its own initiative, officially approached Israel with a request to open the office of an IDF attache on Czechoslovak territory. The defense establishment welcomed and complied with this request.

Israel expects other East European governments and armies to express interest in products manufactured by Israel Military Industries and hopes to expand relations with their defense establishments in the future. [passage omitted]

Levi Returns, Outlines German Aid Agreement

TA1703164291 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Text] Germany and Israel agreed on wide-ranging economic cooperation, including aid for immigrant absorption, Foreign Minister David Levi said on his return from a visit to Germany and Italy. Our correspondent Galya Ma'or reports from the airport:

Foreign Minister David Levi returned from a visit to Germany and a short trip to Italy. In his meetings with the German chancellor and foreign minister, Minister Levi discussed political and economic issues, including wide-ranging aid to Israel. Levi said the meetings were very successful.

[Begin Levi recording] I can say that my talks with the chancellor and the foreign minister achieved most of their objectives. We reached good agreements for Israel in two fields. In three weeks, a joint economic committee will convene in Bonn to work out the implementation of the agreements in principle reached with the German Government on economic cooperation, major aid for immigrant absorption, and multiyear credit. [end recording]

On the peace process in our region, Levi said that future steps would be implemented according to an Israeli-U.S. agreement that any move would be based on full coordination between the two states.

[Begin Levi recording] It was agreed that the accords between us are to be based on coordination between the United States and Israel over each step. We should not, therefore, have unnecessary fears. We know what is important and significant, we insist on those points, and we reached an understanding on them. The Arab states' rejection of talks with Israel is, I hope, reaching a turning point. The more our friends act to get such a speedy change, the more they will find Israel ready to pursue the objective of peace. As I have said, we do not need to be led to that. We want to lead. [end recording]

Referring to the halt in the exodus of Ethiopian Jews to Israel in recent weeks, Levi said the issue was raised in talks with U.S. Secretary of State Baker, and aid was promised from international sources as quickly as possible.

Reportage on David Levi Visit to Italy

WA1803201591

For reportage on the visit by Foreign Minister David Levi to Italy, including reports on his talks with Foreign Minister Gianni de Michelis, please see the Italy & Vatican City section of the 18 March West Europe DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

Syria, USSR 'Expected' To Sign Arms Deal

TA1903094991 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 19 Mar 91 p A1

[Report by Re'uven Pedatzur]

[Text] Syria and the Soviet Union are expected to sign a major arms deal. The financing of $2 billion, the deal's cost, will come from funds Damascus received from the Gulf states. If carried out, it would be one of the biggest arms deals Syria has signed in recent years.

Syria's list of acquisitions includes: Modern fighter-bombers and additional MiG-29 and Sukhoi-24 fighter aircraft; sophisticated surface-to-air missiles designed to build up Syria's antiaircraft missile layout and improve its performance; ballistic missiles, in addition to the recently received North Korean Scud missiles; and sophisticated tanks, mainly T-72's, and various models of armored vehicles.

It is unclear what kind of missiles the Soviet Union will sell to Syria. The U.S.-USSR agreement stipulates that the superpowers will refrain from selling medium-range missiles.

In the past, the Syrians wanted to purchase Soviet SS-23 ballistic missiles, which are included in the category of missiles the superpowers had resolved not to sell. Out of economic considerations, the Soviet Union has recently

been attempting to increase its arms sales abroad. For this reason, the Soviets are expected to respond to most of the acquisition requests.

Lebanese Unit Commander Avows Unchanged Policy

TA1903101691 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 19 Mar 91 p 1

[Report by David Rudge]

[Text] Israel is unlikely to change its policy towards the south Lebanon security zone in the near future, possibly for several years, an IDF [Israel Defense Forces] liaison officer has told zone residents.

Four conditions would have to be met before any change in the status quo could be expected, Brig-Gen. Mikha Tamir, head of the IDF's Lebanese liaison unit, told members of the regional committee in Marj 'Uyun on Sunday.

They included the disarming of all terror and militia forces in south Lebanon, coupled with positive proof of Lebanese government and army control of the region.

For the first time in many years, the Lebanese Army has recently deployed over 2,000 troops in parts of south Lebanon as part of the policy of President Ilyas al-Hirawi's Syrian backed government to extend its control over the country.

Tamir, whose comments were broadcast on the South Lebanon Army-run Voice of the South radio, said another condition would be a sovereign Lebanese government and not a puppet regime that took its orders from Syria.

Similarly, any change in the present situation would have to include a change in Syria's status in Lebanon.

He noted that Syria controlled almost three-quarters of Lebanon with a large force of troops, but the Lebanese government has implied that Israel—with a limited force in a relatively small part of Lebanon—was the country's main problem.

Tamir was quoted by the radio as adding another proviso to any overall agreement: If the previous conditions were met, Israel would insist on a cast-iron accord guaranteeing the status, future, livelihoods and security of SLA [South Lebanese Army] members and thousands of other zone residents who had worked with it.

Army To Increase Aid to Lebanese Security Zone

TA1903082691 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0600 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] The defense establishment will increase Israel's civil aid to the security zone in southern Lebanon by $1 million. The funds, which are to be transferred in the very near future, will be invested in improving the electricity and water infrastructure in the area's villages and in bolstering the local health system.

Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that the additional investment was designed to show the security zone inhabitants that Israel retains an interest in the region, and that there is no truth to the many reports emanating from Lebanon that the link between Israel and the security zone will cease in the framework of an international arrangement.

Increase in Exports to USSR, Poland Noted

TA1803114791 Tel Aviv HATZOFE in Hebrew 18 Mar 91 p 1

[Report by the economic correspondent in Jerusalem]

[Excerpt] Israel's exports to the USSR increased 160 percent in the first months of 1991 compared with the same period last year and totaled $3 million. Exports to Poland increased 6.5 times over the same period and totaled $7.6 million. Industry and Trade Ministry officials noted that the impressive increase took place during the war in the Gulf. [passage omitted]

No Objection to UN Mideast Envoy's Appointment

TA1703085891 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 17 Mar 91 p 2

[Report by New York correspondent Tzadoq Yehezqeli]

[Excerpts] Acting behind Israel's back, the UN secretary general has sent letters to the member countries asking them to inform him of their position on the way in which the signatories on the Geneva Conventions could be convened to discuss the question of Israel's occupation of the territories. [passage omitted]

Israel has learned that within the next few days the UN secretary general will officially announce the appointment of Edouard Brunner, the Swiss ambassador in Washington, as his official and permanent envoy to the Middle East, according to Security Council Resolution 242. De Cuellar would thus be reviving a position which had been held 20 years ago by Gunnar Jarring.

It has been learned that Israel will not object to the appointment of the envoy but will demand that, in accordance with Resolution 242, he should be authorized to deal only with the conflict between Israel and the Arab countries. Israel will object to the envoy holding talks with Palestinians. [passage omitted]

'Ami Popper Sentenced for Rishon Leziyyon Murders

TA1703113191 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1100 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Text] The Tel Aviv District Court has sentenced 'Ami Popper to seven consecutive life terms for the murder of seven Arabs [in Rishon Leziyyon in May 1990], and to 20 years imprisonment for the attempted murder of another 11 Arabs. The judges ruled that although the murders had been committed in one continued shooting,

Popper could have stopped firing at any moment. Instead, he changed four magazines and indiscriminately sprayed the victims.

The judges noted that this had been an unprecedentedly vicious, illogical deed contradicting every norm of human and Jewish behavior. Our correspondent Ron Nesi'el reports that as the sentence was being read Popper began pounding the table, and he was taken out of the courtroom by policemen. His relatives went berserk, cursed the judges, and verbally abused the prosecutor, Dorit Shapira, who burst out crying. His grandfather, who has a heart condition, was taken ill and was evacuated to the hospital in an ambulance. The uproar outside the courtroom continued for a long time.

General Mordekhay on Intifadah, Jordanian Border

TA1603185791 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 16 Mar 91

[Interview with Major General Yitzhaq Mordekhay, commander of the Central Command, by Yoni Ben-Menahem; date and place not given—recorded in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles]

[Text] [Ben-Menahem] Major General Mordekhay, you are leaving Judaea and Samaria after 20 months on the job as the commander of the Central Command. What is the state of the intifadah?

[Mordekhay] The level of violence has undoubtedly been reduced. Thousands of wanted men and terror and uprising activists have been hurt and arrested. Many weapons have been uncovered, and the level of violence in the field is totally different than that of 20 months ago. We also adopted new operational methods; we deployed and stationed the forces in encampments. We secured the main traffic arteries. There is not one centimeter in Judaea and Samaria that we do not enter with small forces, whether these be special or regular units. In short, we feel that the level of violence is reduced and that control in the field is very high. Nevertheless, we have employed all the institutions of the Civil Administration.

[Ben-Menahem] Sir, we have recently observed an increase in the number of infiltrations from the Jordanian border. Do you now, at the end of your tenure, feel that the border is boiling over and that you are entrusting your replacement with a dangerous border?

[Mordekhay] No. Over the past 20 months I have, in conjunction with the activities in Judaea and Samaria, dealt with the Jordanian border. I was guided by two major principles. One was to establish immediate contact with any infiltrator and get him. That was the case; not even one terrorist managed to harm one Israeli citizen or to endanger the life of an Israeli citizen. To my sorrow, we were forced to pay with the lives of five soldiers in the Bet She'an valley, the Jordan Valley, and the Jordan Rift valley over these past 20 months. The second major principle guiding me was not to permit any deterioration in the state of security along the Jordanian border. I wanted Jews along this side of the border and Jordanians along the other side to be able to work in their fields and live tranquil and secure lives. My aim was to successfully confront the terrorists but not to change the basic situation of quiet and security along the border. This is also the state of affairs I bequeath to my successor.

[Ben-Menahem] Does the Jordanian Army still foil terrorist attempts to infiltrate Israel from Jordanian territory?

[Mordekhay] These infiltrations came against the will and contrary to the viewpoint of the Jordanians. They tried to cope with this problem, they managed to stop dozens of squads that attempted to infiltrate into Israel. Therefore, if I were to isolate the last incident, which occurred two days ago in the Tirat Tzvi area, I can point out that the Jordanians and the Jordanian administration has exerted and continues to exert efforts to foil attacks against Israel through their territory.

[Ben-Menahem] Even after the Iraqi defeat?

[Mordekhay] Even more so. I think that especially after the defeat of the Iraqis they should be determined to prevent any exacerbation along the border, otherwise their situation will become very uncomfortable.

[Ben-Menahem] Maj. Gen. Mordekhay, what were your most difficult moments during your 20 months as head of the Central Command?

[Mordekhay] The sheer volume of activity, of constant alert. The most difficult moments of all came when we had to deal with the home front when the Scud missiles landed, injuring civilians and property. Those were the most difficult moments. All the rest was nothing compared to the more difficult and complex moments I have already faced during my life.

[Ben-Menahem] Do you think the home front was prepared for these missile attacks?

[Mordekhay] To the best of my judgment, and considering the tremendous efforts we made to bridge the gaps during the last few months—we deployed, trained, drilled, and prepared the home front to be able to respond to the subsequent developments and even to tougher ones.

[Ben-Menahem] Thank you, Major General Mordekhay.

Palestinians Call For Open Talks With Shamir

TA1703084691 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 17 Mar 91 p 10

[Report by Jon Immanuel]

[Excerpt] Palestinians would welcome talks with the prime minister, but they should be "in the light" and not secret, leading activists said yesterday.

They were responding to a report in Friday's JERUSALEM POST. An authoritative Israeli official said Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir intended to have secret meetings with Palestinians "who have clout in the their community," even if in public they supported the PLO.

"If he would like to do something it should be in the light. I do not accept secret meetings," said Faysal al-Husayni. He added that he would, if asked, have no objection to an open meeting with Shamir.

But, judging from the official's remarks about not meeting "media stars," al-Husayni doubted that Shamir had him in mind for a meeting.

He said Shamir should invite PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat for talks.

Mayor Ilyas Frayj of Bethlehem also said any meetings should be public. He accepted that Shamir may be only trying to provide security for any Palestinian who might want to meet him, but Frayj said such protection was unnecessary.

"We all live together. Why make meetings secret? I invited Mr. Shamir to Bethlehem's Christmas party. If I am asked to meet Mr. Shamir I would accept." Frayj said he would not keep a meeting secret.

"It is really a very late step," he said. "The Israelis only do this when someone comes from overseas with an initiative. Israel has to make a courageous peace offer to its Palestinian neighbours." [passage omitted]

Al-Tayyiba Arabs Arrested for 'Terrorist' Acts

TA1403114091 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 14 Mar 91 p A7

[Report by Ehud Rabinowitz]

[Text] During the Gulf war, Sharon District policemen, in cooperation with the Shin Bet, uncovered several Fatah and Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] terrorist gangs and cells in al-Tayyiba in the Triangle.

The affair was released to the press yesterday, at the end of the interrogation of the 58 suspects. Thirty-four of them have been charged and are being held in custody until the end of legal proceedings.

The investigation was launched in the wake of a tip that led to the arrest of several local youngsters suspected of engaging in nationalist activities. Under a total blackout, a special investigation team managed to arrest close to 60 youngsters, mostly residents of al-Tayyiba, in the last two months. Some of them were found to possess guns, assault rifles, fragmentation grenades, homemade bombs, ammunition, and large quantities of inflammatory publications.

The security forces were surprised by the scope of the influence of the terrorist organizations. Almost all of them, as well as the Islamic movements operating in the territories, were represented in al-Tayyiba by terrorist gangs and cells which operated without any coordination. In some cases, they cooperated with terrorist organizations in the territories by buying arms for them. Several gangs organized on a local basis, and their main activity was to create turmoil on anniversaries of deaths and after nationalist events. It has been learned that some suspects were found in the possession of homemade bombs, with which they had planned to stage attacks in Israel. It has also been learned that the firebombs that exploded in the fields of Kibbutz Eyal a few months ago had been assembled and planted by members of one such gang.

Poll Shows Country Split on Territories for Peace

TA1103100391 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 11 Mar 91 p 1

[Public opinion poll commissioned by YEDI'OT AHARONOT and conducted by Dahaf Institute on 7 and 10 March; answers given in percentages]

[Text] Question: Is the principle of "territories for peace" acceptable to you?

Acceptable	Unacceptable
49	49

Question: If we face the need to decide on the future of the territories in accordance with the above principle, should it be done by referendum or by a cabinet resolution?

Referendum	Cabinet
75	24

The above telephone survey questioned 506 interviewees, representing a sample of the Jewish population. It was conducted last Thursday and this Sunday.

Royal Decree Adjourns Lower House Session

NC1703145891 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 17 Mar 91 p 1

[Text] Amman (J.T.)—A Royal Decree was issued Saturday ending the current session of the Lower House of Parliament effective March, 17, 1991, in accordance with Article 78 of the Jordanian Constitution.

According to the Constitution, the next ordinary session is due in October. However, another Royal Decree could convene Parliament in an extraordinary session to discuss specified issues.

The Royal Decree was read out in Parliament, which Saturday held its last meeting in the current ordinary session.

During the session, replies by the government to deputies' queries were read out and the House heard reports by its committees on their work in the ordinary session.

In its ordinary session, which started in October, the Lower House held 33 sessions and tackled a number of issues but dominated by the Gulf crisis and the subsequent war.

Government May Participate in Arab League Session

NC1803170191 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1510 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Amman, 18 Mar (PETRA)—The JORDAN NEWS AGENCY [JNA] has learned that the government has decided in principle to participate in the meetings of the Arab League [AL] Council's 95th ordinary session, due to open in Cairo on 30 March.

The JNA correspondent has learned that the Foreign Ministry has called Jordan's Ambassador in Cairo Nabih al-Nimr for consultations on a number of issues, foremost of which is Jordan's participation in the council's upcoming session.

A responsible source at the Foreign Ministry told JNA that appropriate decisions and procedures about this participation will be made in the next few days in light of the consultations with the ambassador.

The Arab League Council's upcoming session is the first ordinary session to be held in the Egyptian capital after the League headquarters' return to Cairo. The participants will discuss several issues and subjects concerning joint Arab action, Arab and international issues, economic matters, an Arab boycott of Israel, the Palestinian issue, the Arab-Israeli conflict, Arab-African cooperation, the Arab-European dialogue, the joint Arab economic action, and a number of administrative and financial matters.

If convened at the level of foreign ministers, a significant portion of the session is expected to be devoted to the discussion of Arab cooperation within the Arab League framework in the aftermath of the Gulf war. Other issues to be discussed include the means of reaching a formula to achieve security and cooperation in the Arab region and how to achieve Arab reconciliation in accordance with the requirements of the higher Arab interest.

Editorial Demands UN Resolutions Implementation

NC1403043291 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 13 Mar 91 pp 1, 15

[Editorial: "International Legitimacy and U.S. Legitimacy!"]

[Text] Although we are by no means convinced of this, let us concede for the sake of argument that the U.S. objective in launching the Mogul campaign by the international alliance against the Iraqi people was to enforce respect for international legitimacy and its principles, and that the United States, through its monopolizing role in the international community, established a precedent that can be applied when political efforts fail or are thwarted, as was the case with the Gulf crisis.

What President Bush or his secretary of state say does not mean very much to us. We have lived with such statements for 24 years. We have heard similar talk from previous U.S. presidents and their secretaries of state about the importance of respecting legitimacy, the need for a political settlement to the Arab-Zionist conflict, and the national rights of the Palestinian Arab people. On each occasion and with each new U.S. administration, however, we witnessed nothing but a new loss of credibility that deserved our disdain and the exposure of the U.S. hostility toward every Arab issue, a hostility which must be confronted.

We do not ask the United States to impose an embargo on the Israeli people to deprive them of food and medicine or to wage war against them and kill their women, children, and old people and destroy their religious shrines, houses, schools, factories, and even shelters. Our ethics and humanity do not allow us to descend to the level of the Mogul behavior of the United States as it destroyed Iraq and slaughtered its people with all the weapons of destruction and annihilation for 40 days without pause. We do demand, however, that Washington enforce full respect for and secure the full implementation of Resolutions Nos. 242 and 338. We are not interested in the political means used to achieve this, and we do not make an international conference or anything else a condition. The objective is to stop the Zionist aggression against the Arab nation that has been going on since 1967, and bring about a full Zionist withdrawal from all occupied Arab land in Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, and even Egypt, despite the fact that the Egyptian Government prefers not to acknowledge that part of its land is still occupied.

We stress this so that the United States does not imagine that we believe that holding an international conference is more important than securing the implementation of Resolutions Nos. 242 and 338. Washington must realize that the object must be the implementation of the

resolutions and not attempt to distract us by claiming that we disagree over the means. The Arab-U.S. disagreement stems from a U.S. decision, from which the United States has not yet retreated, to impose U.S.-Zionist hegemony on the homeland, the nation, its wealth, and its decisionmaking. The Washington-led Mogul aggression against the Iraqi people was but one aspect of the U.S. adherence to this decision and its continuing plan to entrench Zionist superiority, Arab weakness, and hegemony over Arab oil wealth.

We welcome the holding an international conference if the objective is to find a mechanism to apply the UN resolutions. Otherwise, we see it only as a waste of time and a new U.S. attempt to contain these resolutions. Here, we would like to point out that our participation in the U.S. lie will be much smaller than that of those who were promised by Washington that it would seek a just political settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict just as soon as the Mogul aggression against the Iraqi people was over.

UN Criticized Over 'Occupation' of South Iraq

JN1603102291 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 16 Mar 91 p 4

[Editorial: "The Other Side of U.N."]

[Text] Even though more than two weeks have passed since the end of the Gulf war, the economic and military restrictions still imposed on Iraq remain incongruous with the letter and spirit of the U.N. Security Council resolutions on the Kuwaiti conflict. Economic sanctions are still applied against Iraq even though they were applied in the first place because Kuwait continued to be occupied by Iraq contrary to the council Resolution 661. Now that Kuwait has been freed and Iraqi troops fully and completely withdawn, there can be no further excuse for the continuation of economic sanctions against Baghdad.

Iraq is also subjected to occupation by U.S. troops even through the council's resolutions did not envisage or condone such occupation. Besides, the war in the Gulf has ended and there can be no military or political justification for this foreign military presence on Iraqi soil. If anything, there is now a cause for the Security Council to act expeditiously to end this occupation of southern Iraq.

Stability in the region cannot be restored as long as such incongruities and contradictions persist to be the order of the day. There can also be no permanent security and peace in that part of the world as long as Iraq is being subjected to occupation, economic blockade and political ostracisation by the coalition forces of the Gulf war. Baghdad cannot be expected to honour its commitments to make reparations to Kuwait, for example, for losses it sustained due to the Iraqi seven-month occupation, without access to foreign markets to sell its oil and begin the process of reconstruction. There is no way that that war-devastated and -torn country can stand on its feet and begin to meet its obligations under the U.N. resolutions under such dire conditions.

There is little doubt that Iraq's continued well-being and independence are indispensable to the Gulf's and the whole region's stability and security. If the aims of the persistent pressures on Iraq are to divide the country on the basis of religion and ethnicity of the Iraqi people, then there is no sure way to end this process of lebanonisation and prevent it from creeping into the far reaches of the Middle East.

It is absurd that at a time when the U.N. Security Council had acted with full force and speed to end the Kuwaiti occupation it is caught watching with ominous silence attempts to dismember Iraq and topple its legitimate government. The council's complicity in the current conspiracies being waged in the open against that country can be illustrated by its inaction to impose a de jure ceasefire in the area till now. What other motive can there be behind this stalling in declaring such an official truce than to change the Iraqi leadership and create a vacuum that can be exploited by Iraq's neighbours and enemies? Iraq has lived up to all its commitments to the world even though many were arbitrarily imposed on it.

It is now the turn of the international community to live up to its duties and responsibilities towards a member of the U.N. by removing the gory logic and the cynical policies that have characterised international dealings with that bleeding country so far.

Paper on Bush Interview With Arab Journalists

NC1303085091 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 12 Mar 91 p 22

["Seven Days" column by Khalid Mahadin: "Big Powers and Small Leaderships"]

[Text] I wish the Jordanian newspapers had published the text of the press interview President Bush gave to a group of Arab journalists. It is not too late, however, to publish the complete text of that interview. I also wish the American president had given other Arab journalists the opportunity to interview him as he did the allied states' journalists, to allow them to question him and hold a dialogue with him about his premeditated aggression against Iraq and on everything about the Gulf crisis. The Jordanian press has the right to ask the American president for a similar interview because what he said about journalism in our country and what aroused his anger with it deserve that such an interview take place to discuss our democracy and alleged U.S. concern about it.

The text of the interview will convince many people, just as it has convinced me, that the big powers no longer have great leaders. When President Bush describes Iraqi President Saddam Husayn as "a satan, a terrorist, and a bull," the first thing we think of is the vacuum that came in the wake of great leaders such as Kennedy, Mao Tse-tung, Tito, de Gaulle, and Khrushchev—a vacuum that has enabled an American president like George

Bush to deal with other leaders in such a way and to use language that lacks even the minimum of wisdom, decency, and balance.

President George Bush is a typical American politician, who cannot be a statesman and who cannot rise to the level of greatness of the United States. He does not hesitate to say that his aggression against the Iraqi people was not directed at the people but at their president. Nevertheless, he sent his planes and missiles to kill children, women, and elderly; to demolish mosques, churches, and shelters; to destroy power stations and water networks; and to prevent the Iraqi citizens from getting bread, medicine, and water.

President Bush is not embarrassed to talk about democracy while he launched an unjust campaign against our country, our leadership, our people, and our true democracy. He also does not believe our support for peace, for political settlement of the Gulf crisis, and for Iraq against the American war machine to be an option that should be respected rather than attacking it. He should not have ordered his warships and warplanes to impose a siege on us, kill our citizens, and prevent us from getting oil without which we cannot drink water.

The American president describes the alliance he formed through enticements, pressure, and blackmail as one that is not aimed at the Iraqi people. Do the Iraqi citizens, who were targeted by the alliance's hatred, planes, and missiles, belong to another nation? Do the citizens, who were attacked by American planes in the al-'Amiriyah shelter, al-Fallujah, and tens of Iraqi cities and villages, belong to another nation? Were there military targets among the beduin tents when the pilots of the alliance entertained themselves by bombing them and killing the beduins?

We are not bothered by President Bush's anger with the Jordanian people and press or over our support for peace and political settlement before the start of the American-Atlantic-Zionist aggression against the Iraqi people. We would like to ask, however: Why did not he show anger over the absence of supportive demonstrations in the allied states? Only one demonstration of support was organized by Zionism in New York. No similar demonstrations were repeated.

President Bush also talked about the alliance, about U.S. control of it, about the aim of establishing it, and about the objective of its aggression against the Iraqi people based on the principle of "rejection of occupation of other people's land by force."

The question is: Does not this principle apply to Israel's occupation of Arab territories and its rejection of the international legitimacy? Why does President Bush urge us to hold a dialogue with the Israelis 24 years after their occupation of our Arab land, although he did not allow any Iraqi-Kuwaiti and inter-Arab dialogue? Instead, he came with his war machine to do what the Moguls and their leader Hulegu did seven centuries ago?

Finally, you gave an interview to the alliance's press, and we would like to ask if you are ready to hold a similar dialogue with those who refused to place themselves under the U.S. helmet. Are you ready to answer our numerous questions about American credibility and double standards, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the Palestinian people's rights? You may not see that our people have any rights because they do not have oil wells and are unable to finance, hire, and use your military machine for billions of dollars deposited in American and British treasuries.

We are proud of the positions we announced and adopted. Are you proud of your crime of annihilation against our entire nation and the Iraqi people in favor of world Zionism, which controls American decisionmaking. This is the question.

Editorial Urges Bush To Put Pressure on Israel

NC1303043791 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 12 Mar 91 pp 1, 14

[Editorial: "Will Bush's Plan Meet the Same Fate as Earlier One at the Hands of Israel?"]

[Text] After the announcement of Bush's plan to bring about a settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute, the Americans are confining their moves to sounding out the views of the parties involved. Secretary of State James Baker's tour of the region falls within this framework.

Observers inside and outside the region are wondering about Baker's avoidance of a direct meeting with the PLO's leadership. Baker has, however, decided to meet with some Palestinian figures in Jerusalem today in the hope that he may find some response outside the direct influence of the PLO.

But Faysal al-Husayni crossed the t's and dotted the i's when he emphasized that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and that its role cannot be ignored in any peaceful settlement in the region.

Jordan's position can be summed up as being based on the international legitimacy, the Security Council's resolutions, and the "land for peace" principle. This is Jordan's firm position, which His Majesty King Husayn has always emphasized and for which he exerted strenuous efforts to rally international support.

During Baker's visit to the region, the Jordanian position was stressed several times by Crown Prince Hasan, Prime Minister Mudar Badran, and Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri.

Hence, Bush's new plan, which includes a clear emphasis on international legitimacy and the "land for peace" principle, has attracted considerable attention from the PLO and the various Arab parties involved in the settlement process.

At the same time, Israel has announced its categorical rejection of the implications of Bush's plan, especially the principle of withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories, and is trying once again to reactivate Shamir's plan to hold elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip for autonomy under Israeli sovereignty.

This is not the first time Israel has obstructed American initiatives, including Shultz' plan and Bush's own earlier initiative.

If Bush wants his plan to succeed, he needs to put the necessary pressure on Israel to force it to accept his plan, comply with international legitimacy, and recognize the Palestinian people's legitimate rights, including their right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent state on their national soil. The U.S. Administration should also recognize the PLO and its essential role in any settlement in the region and give up any attempts to look for an alternative.

If this is not done, Bush's plan will be nothing more than a political maneuver to preoccupy the attention of the region's peoples and to defuse the anger in Arab and Islamic streets over the U.S.-led allied aggression against fraternal Iraq.

Paper Says Syria Possible Target of U.S.

NC1303233891 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 13 Mar 91 p 4

[Editorial: "The New Sideshow"]

[Text] U.S. media are all of a sudden putting the squeeze once again on Damascus after playing up reports that Syria is now supplying its armed forces with newer models of Scud missiles imported from North Korea. Surely the U.S. government—and most probably some media people as well—knew well in advance that Syria did not take the Gulf crisis as an opportunity to disarm or stop supplying its army with the latest weapon systems needed for its defence. But it seems credible that Washington decided to maintain silence on continuing Syrian armament till the Gulf war was over before raising the issue publicly and forcefully. So, first, it only took a few hours after Israel sounded alarm bells about the arrival of new Scud missiles to Syria for the Americans to echo the same sentiments and "sense of danger." Then, several days later, President Bush's spokesman, no less, attacked Syria on another front. When White House Press Secretary Marlin Fitzwater was asked yesterday about a March 10 report by CBS Television on Syria's alleged record on torture, his reply was: "I think that's the part of the show that was skewed. There has been no change in our policy towards Syria. They remain on the terrorist list. I don't think anybody has illusions about al-Asad and his actions over the last many years." Fitzwater went on to say that everyone is familiar with Amnesty International's documentation of the "atrocities that have occurred there."

The Americans are at it again. Hardly several months after Syria joined some other Arab countries in the coalition that fought Iraq, Damascus itself has become the target of U.S. allegation that it is not only a major perpetrator of torture but also runs a school on torture! The question that comes to mind is whether targetting Syria now is a prelude to some concerted action by Washington similar to that vicious campaign launched against Iraq last April. Israel cannot be too far behind this new campaign against Syria, just like it was not when President Saddam Husayn threatened to burn half of Israel if the Jewish state attacked Iraq during that month.

It is a well-known fact that Iraq was concerned and subjected to a savage and catastrophic war basically because it constituted a regional power that did not tally with Washington's posture in the Gulf and Middle East regions. With Iraq out of the way, is it not probable that Syria will be also concerned in due course just like Iraq was and then made the object of another onslaught against another Arab country simply because it poses a military threat to Israel and because of its human rights record?

At a time when all attention is focused on peace efforts, in light of the emergence of "new thinking," in the area, it is not easy to talk about and dwell on side issues that do not help the cause of making progress on the peace front and bringing about reconcilitation. But is is always important to remember that the Gulf crisis, in our opinion, started long before the Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait and that it was ignited by media reports against the Arab country and regime like that which appeared on CBS' "60 Minutes" on March 10. In April it was Israel plus the Western, mainly American and British, media against Iraq. Today, it is the first combine against Syria. Tomorrow, what happens is anybody's guess.

It is well and good that the U.S. government and media are interested in furthering democracy and human rights everywhere. They should. What we have to warn against, though, is that if the Americans are really serious and willing to bring about peace to the Middle East, their effort should not be derailed by those who can rock the boat, and who have made spreading the poison their business and goal.

Paper Criticizes Arabs on 'Starvation' of Iraq

NC1803124691 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 18 Mar 91 pp 1, 18

[Editorial: "Besieging Iraq Is a Slow War of Annihilation"]

[Text] There has never been such hatred toward a nation as that of the West toward the Iraqi people, and there has never been an uglier picture of racism as that against Arabs and Muslims in general and the Iraqi people in particular. Since mid-August, the Iraqi brothers have been facing a real starvation war led by the United States and its Western allies and blessed by the rest of the allies, unrestrained by conscience or morals. It is driven by the

intention to make the Iraqis taste hunger by depriving them of food, and suffer disease by depriving them of medicine, and the intention to slowly annihilate them.

It is alarming that this war is launched from Washington, London, and Paris and that there are no Arab voices rejecting it out of Arab, Muslim, or humane fraternity. These three capitals, along with all alliance capitals, experience great joy and great racist pleasure as the embargo on fraternal Iraq enters its eighth month with no sign on the horizon of an Arab, Muslim, or humanitarian move to condemn this Western barbarity, expose this black hatred toward the Arabs and Muslims, or call on the international community to come out on the side of an Arab people facing starvation and diseases, and unable to get food or medicine.

It is the first time in history that a people are subjected to what the Iraqi people are being subjected to, and a country faces what great Iraq is now facing. Despite this, the series of lies continues about international legitimacy, human rights, and the need to close the gap between the rich and the poor in our region. The false political moves also continue to search for a solution to the Palestine question and give the Palestinian people their legitimate rights. It is difficult to believe in these moves, however, in light of the scandal of maintaining the embargo on the Iraqi people; thus imposing starvation and the spread of disease and death among its children, women, and elderly who are searching for medicine.

The hatred toward the Iraqis is similar to the hatred toward the Palestinians. It is also similar to the openly practiced Western hatred toward Arabs and Muslims. Despite this, we hear no voices of condemnation or denunciation. The U.S. resolutions issued at the Security Council become more sacred, important, and obligatory than Islam and its teachings that call for Muslim solidarity and unity.

We fully understand why the Western capitals insist on practicing their hatred toward us that stems from their hatred toward Arabism and Islam. We do not, however, understand how the Arab accepts for his Iraqi brother to suffer all this suffering, and how the Muslim remains silent to the slow slaughter of his Muslim Iraqi brother?!

Now that the Gulf crisis has ended with the return of the Kuwaiti people to their land, what is the national, pan-Arab, Islamic, and religious justification for the position of those who join the Western Mogul in starving the Iraqi people and depriving them of food and medicine?!

This is the difficult question, if they only knew it!

Iran's 'Conspiracy' Against Iraq, Arabs Examined

NC1403084291 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 13 Mar 91 p 16

[Article by Salih Qallab: "An Iranian Dagger in Iraq's Back"]

[Text] "Be wary of the safe place." As soon as the Gulf war broke out, Iraq turned a new leaf in its relations with Tehran on the basis of the indisputable fact that: "In the face of the principal conflict, minor ones disappear." Iraqi leaders believed the Iranian leaders would deal with the situation this way, would renounce all previous hatred and complexes, and would use all their weight to confront the "big Satan," which Iran's mass media and literature have viewed over the past three decades as its number one foe.

The hopes of Iraqis in particular and Arabs in general were dashed by Hashemi-Rafsanjani's insistence on keeping in his heart inherited complexes and the fancied conflict that has caused much suffering to Muslims and repeatedly divided and fragmented them, making them victims of bloody conflicts and unjust and devil-like foreign forces.

When the time for the ground war between Iraq and the allied countries led by the United States approached, "official" Iran, reports say, sent approximately 35,000 armed men to the city of al-Basrah in order to control it and declare a state for a certain sect in southern Iraq on the model of the "official" Republic of Iran so that it could become an extension of the republic on Arab land.

The most dangerous element in the move, which was seen as an armed invasion and a stab in the back with the dagger of a friend, is that it came while the Iraqis were preparing for a decisive historic battle and while Baghdad expected Tehran to extend help rather than stab it with the dagger of treachery. The other dangerous thing in the move was that it took place in coordination with movement in prominent Arab arenas with the purpose of forming a "government" in exile supported by the United States, "the big Satan", and its allies. After absorbing and controlling the invasion, the Iraqi security organs arrested a minister of that government. It is believed that Baghdad will disclose the whole thing at the appropriate time to give very clear evidence of the despicable conspiracy.

What would have happened if that conspiracy had succeeded and if Iraq had not withdrawn its forces from the battlefield in order to repulse it? The establishment of an Iranian-controlled sectarian state in southern Iraq would realize the Zionist dream of dividing the Arab region into disputing sectarian statelets as in the times of Andalusia. In fact, the establishment of such a statelet would be followed by other attempts to establish similar statelets in southern Lebanon and in a number of other Arab countries that do not have a unified religious fabric.

Hence, no one with a vision can believe Iran's official statements, which deny any Iranian involvement in the conspiracy. Evidence from the field; the news carried by the Iranian news agency, Tehran Radio, and Iranian newspapers; and the meetings held under Arab and Iranian official sponsorship indicate otherwise. Lastly, we can say that we were disappointed three times by the

Iranian "revolution". The first time when that "revolution" shed much blood and failed to become an example to be followed in the region; the second time when the Iranian "revolution" took a hostile position toward the Arab nation just as the shah did; and now this, the third time.

Division Seen at Iraqi Opposition Meeting

NC1303053091 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 12 Mar 91 p 16

["Spotlights" column by Tahir al-'Udwan: "Puppet Conference in Beirut"]

[Text] The meeting being held in Beirut by the so-called Iraqi opposition represents one of the main features of the current and future Arab stage. It consecrates the state of Arab division that emerged during the Gulf crisis and emphasizes that conflict, not peace, is the hallmark of this stage in the region under the new world order.

The Iraqi communists who participated in the psychological warfare against their country during the crisis while the British Desert Rats prepared to invade Iraq are in the same trench as Ayatollah Mudarrisi, who incited disturbances in Iraqi cities with the first wave of the U.S.-Atlantic-Zionist ground attack on Iraq.

Such an equation would have been unthinkable before the Gulf war. The Iraqis were right when they described this war as the mother of battles because it exposed the true nature of political regimes and movements and placed them into clear categories, so that it has become easy to distinguish the evil from the good.

The Lebanese Government has nothing to do with the Beirut conference. Lebanon was not a party to the U.S.-Atlantic alliance. The fact that this conference, which raises the slogan of toppling President Saddam Husayn, is being held on Lebanese soil provides an indication of the state of affairs in Lebanon. This underscores the validity of Iraq's demand that Lebanon be included in a just peace in the region in accordance with the 12 August initiative.

The so-called conference in Beirut is being held under the conditions of the new conflict in the region. It is a conflict between those who gathered under the U.S. flag, led by James Baker, and the Arabs, in whose vanguard President Saddam will remain a struggler Arab leader as Iraq remains the fortress of Arab steadfastness and the nation's symbol in its resistance of Zionism and the new colonialism in all its manifestations.

One final word: Those who are lining up under the U.S. flag are mistaken if they think they are in a position that will allow them to attack what is left of the bastions of loftiness and rejection of Americanization and capitulation. The war in the Gulf still burns in anger in the hearts of the Arab masses. These masses now know who their national, pan-Arab, and Islamic parties are. They also know how to distinguish between legitimate opposition and the puppets who mortgaged themselves to serve the foreigner and its hostile designs against Iraq and its Arab nation.

King, Yemeni President Exchange Congratulations

NC1803103991 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 0955 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Amman, 18 Mar (PETRA)—His Majesty King Husayn exchanged congratulations on the arrival of the blessed month of Ramadan with His Excellency Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih during a telephone conversation last night. They also exchanged views on current regional issues.

Editorial Discusses Principles of Foreign Policy

NC1503035291 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 14 Mar 91 pp 1, 12

[Editorial: "The Guiding Principles of Jordan's Policy"]

[Text] The foreign minister did a good thing yesterday when he addressed the House of Representatives on the principles that guide Jordan's foreign policy. He thus refuted all Western analyses and reports that spoke of a change in Jordan's position.

The foreign minister stressed that, in the wake of the Gulf crisis and despite all its negative repercussions, Jordan will remain what it was before and during the crisis: an important scene of political and diplomatic movement, a meeting point, and a bridge in the region.

If the search for a political settlement to the Middle East crisis is the top priority of the current intensive meetings, contacts, and diplomatic efforts taking place around us, then Jordan's foreign policy on this issue is guided by the following four principles:

One: Jordan plays an important and vital role in the region which cannot be circumvented or ignored. This is our firm conviction, and we are fully aware of our role which we carry out positively and with great self-respect. Therefore, we will continue to fulfill our pan-Arab duty toward the main Arab issue, the Palestine question.

Two: The Palestine question must be resolved as soon as possible in accordance with the principles of international legitimacy, the implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions Nos. 242 and 338, and the exchange of land for peace. This must be done with the same determination and commitment that was shown by the international community on the Gulf crisis.

Three: If these efforts and movements are to bear fruit, the Palestinians must participate in resolving their issue through their recognized representative, the PLO, to which there can be no alternative.

Four: An international conference remains the most appropriate formula to resolve the Palestine question. For this reason, Jordan continues to support such a

conference, which must include all parties concerned in addition to the five permanent members of the Security Council. The participation of the latter is especially important in view of the unprecedented agreement exisiting among them on current international issues.

These principles, which the foreign minister outlined to the House of Representatives yesterday, now take on even more importance as a result of the growing diplomatic efforts and intensive political contacts to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict and all aspects of the Palestine question.

As this movement continues around it, Jordan reaffirms these pillars which together constitute the guiding principles of the foreign policy of a country that believes principles, not interests, must direct policies and that eternal truths, not changing circumstances, will ultimately determine the outcome.

Iran Reopens Embassy After 10 Years

LD1603213391 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 2030 GMT 16 Mar 91

[Text] The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran reopened in Jordan today after a 10-year break in relations between the two countries. According to IRNA, the flag of the Islamic Republic of Iran was hoisted over the embassy's temporary building during the reopening ceremony.

Iran and Jordan resumed their relations in Dey of this year [Iranian month beginning 22 December 1990].

Women's Delegation Goes to Iraq With Relief Aid

NC1403223791 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1507 GMT 14 Mar 91

[Text] Amman, 14 Mar (PETRA)—A convoy carrying 150 tons of medicine, medical supplies, and foodstuffs to support fraternal Iraq left Amman for Baghdad today. Dr. Musa Abu-Hamid, chairman of the Arab health committee for emergencies which supervised the setup of the convoy, stated that the committee's provision of medicines and other medical requirements for fraternal Iraq came as a result of Iraq's urgent need for these materials.

He added that the committee is continuing to collect money and other donations, and is sending them to fraternal Iraq. He said that shipment of 43 tons of medicine, medical supplies, and foodstuffs donated by the fraternal Tunisian people arrived in Amman from Tunisia last night, and will be sent to fraternal Iraq through the committee. He explained that additional quantities of medicine, medical supplies, and food will arrive from Tunisia in the near future. A delegation of 25 women representing the Jordanian General Women's Federation left with the convoy.

Fadlallah Examines U.S. Regional Intentions

NC1503152991 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 1230 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Text] Concerning the situation in the region, Ayatollah al-Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah said that the Gulf war has not officially ended since no official decision to end this war has been made. All that is being said about the implementation of international resolutions, such as Resolution 425 and other resolutions concerning the region, has no substance so far.

In his Friday sermon today, his eminence said that there is a complex occupation of the region. The facade of this occupation is made up of Arab leaders who have U.S. protection behind them. We are afraid for our future. We are afraid that the bid for freedom may disappear from our minds and that jihad may disappear from our life, he stated.

His eminence said that America and the countries allied with it have entered Iraq on the pretext that they need to outflank the Iraqi Army. But what is the meaning of their current occupation of 15 percent of Iraq's land? The arguments they offer for staying until the situation stabilizes are unacceptable, he said, for they want to hold on to the land in order to achieve the economic objectives of their allies and monitor the progress of the popular uprising against the Iraqi regime.

His eminence said that the uprising in Iraq is an Islamic one and that even the revolt in northern Iraq has an Islamic aspect.

His eminence commended the national unity shown in the conference [of the Iraqi opposition forces] that was held in Beirut. All the participants demonstrated a sense of unity. Fadlallah expressed his fear of possible interference by the intelligence service of more than one side to ensure that the coming government [in Iraq] does not represent the people. There are reports of an arrogant [istikbari—adjective mostly reserved to denote the United States] rejection of a goverment [in Iraq] that is founded on a popular basis. Such a scheme is accepted by several regional forces.

Fadlallah said that there are attempts to contain the uprising through a U.S. plot to stage a military coup against Saddam and bring a new ruler from the military clique to read communique no. 1.

Sa'adah Says No Decision Yet on Participation

NC1803185191 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Minister George Sa'adah has requested that his stand on participation in the government not be taken from the newspapers. He suggested that people wait for a clear decision which will be issued by the Phalangist Party's political bureau.

Minister Sa'adah said: Until this moment, we have not made a final decision. Our policy is that we either accept or reject what others say.

Minister Sa'adah referred to improvements on certain points in the al-Ta'if agreement, noting that the issue of appointing deputies is heresy. [passage omitted]

Army Clashes With Israeli-Backed South Lebanese

NC1903112691 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1110 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] For the first time since the Lebanese Army deployed in southern Lebanon, clashes occurred today between the Lebanese Army and the South Lebanese Army [SLA], on the outskirts of Mlikh Township. According to security sources, the clashes erupted when an SLA patrol intercepted a Lebanese Army unit that was removing mines on the outskirts of Mlikh. These clashes are continuing. The sources say that both the Lebanese Army and the SLA have reinforced their positions in Mlikh.

Army Deploys in Coastal Area; Equipment Arrives

NC1803155491 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1445 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Minister al-Murr announces that Lebanese Army units have deployed in the coastal area between Khaldah and al-Damur and that the deployment in all parts of the town of al-Damur was completed this afternoon. The Army units will conduct the necessary sweeps in implementation of the cabinet decision to eliminate arms and gunmen in the area. [passage omitted]

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Defense has announced that ammunition and hardware for the Lebanese Army, sent by the United States, were unloaded in the port of Tripoli and transferred to the logistics brigade headquarters in Kafr Shima today.

Foreign Airlines Resuming Flights to Beirut

NC1703182191 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Text] Civil Aviation General Manager Engineer 'Abd-al-Mun'im Shihadah has affirmed that contacts are under way to urge all foreign airlines to resume flights to Lebanon soon. Shihadah noted that the Romanian airlines, Tarom, will start flying to Beirut in April. It has also been learned that Royal Jordanian and Kuwait Airways will resume their flights to Beirut soon.

A Czechoslovak airlines plane landed at Beirut airport this morning, bringing a number of passengers from Prague. This is the first time a Czechoslovak civilian plane has landed in Beirut since the beginning of the Gulf crisis. The airplane later left Beirut with 26 passengers on board.

Another plane belonging to the Bulgarian airlines, Balkan, arrived in Beirut this morning from Sofia with 110 passengers on board on its first trip since the Gulf crisis broke out. It took off an hour later with 50 passengers on board.

Observers believe that the good tidings of the return of international civil aviation to Lebanon is a vote of confidence in Lebanon's ability to regain its role in the region and the world as a link and bridge.

Khaddam Returns From Visit, Talks in Beirut

NC1803072191 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0515 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam returned to Damascus from Beirut last night at the end of his visit to Lebanon.

Khaddam discussed with President al-Hirawi the situation in the region after the Gulf war, Lebanese conditions, relations of cooperation and brotherhood between the two sisterly countries, and ways of continuing the implementation of the national reconciliation charter and process. Prime Minister 'Umar Karami joined the meeting.

Following his talks with al-Hirawi, Khaddam answered reporters' questions by saying that they agreed on all issues discussed. Khaddam said that Syria is clearly and permanently committed to supporting the Lebanese state and legitimacy and extending any efforts that this state might request for implementing national reconciliation, promoting the state's authority, and imposing state power and sovereignty over the entire Lebanese territory.

Khaddam emphasized the need for national reconciliation to be completed. He said the Lebanese have no other choice, adding that handling the Lebanese situation is the Lebanese people's prerogative and that the role of others is to help the Lebanese to achieve the best results.

Damascus Places Palestine Before Golan Heights

NC1803232791 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 16 Mar 91

[Station commentary]

[Text] Since the start of serious talk about a just solution to the Arab-Zionist dispute following the [1973] October war of liberation, Syria, through leader President Hafiz al-Asad, affirmed that an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories and a guarantee of the Palestinian people's rights to their territory and homeland are two basic conditions for the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. Throughout the past 20 years, Syria continuously stressed these two conditions. They were affirmed by leader al-Asad in his meeting with U.S. President George Bush in Geneva and at his meeting with Secretary of State James Baker, who visited Damascus a few days ago.

Because Syria has always been faithful to what it says and is committed to international principles and charters, and because events have proven the soundness of its expectations, Syria, following the Gulf war, has become a major center of Arab and international activity in view of its organic relationship with the Palestine question and its qualitative and quantitative weight in any serious move toward the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace, especially since Syria was among the first to condemn the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and to warn of its serious dangers. It is hoped that among the lessons learned by the United States from the Gulf crisis is that dealing sincerely and in a responsible manner with Syria and the Arabs in general is the only successful policy. This is evidenced by the sincerity and responsibility displayed by Syria and the Arabs in dealing with international legitimacy's resolutions on this crisis. Perhaps what enhances this hope is the declaration of the United States, through President Bush and Secretary of State Baker, that UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 are the basis of a settlement, and that duplicity in dealing with the UN resolutions is no longer permissible.

While the international community is responding to the need to swiftly tackle the Middle East crisis so that the peace efforts will not lose their momentum, and while many influential voices are being raised demanding that the United States show the required firmness to make Israel respond to international resolutions, the Israeli enemy is trying to circumvent this international effort, depending as usual on the policy of maneuvers and procrastination. Thus, it declared rejection of any peace concept, except for the Israeli peace concept, which, in practice, means absorbing and Judaizing the occupied territories and displacing their people. In other words, this means a continued aggression against the Arabs. In fact, this means a continued aggression against the international resolutions which in no uncertain terms call on Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories—be it the Golan Heights, the West Bank, Jerusalem, Gaza, or southern Lebanon.

Naturally, the Israeli stand is rejected and condemned. The Arabs demand nothing more than the implementation of the international resolutions. It is their right that the international community implement its resolutions, just as it did toward the Gulf crisis. For the Arab position to be really influential and effective, there is no alternative to unifying efforts and rallying ranks. This is the core of the Damascus Declaration, which should be endorsed by all Arabs after the Iraqi people declared through their valiant uprising and nationalist opposition the resounding pan-Arab voice of Iraq and its rejection of the regime which brought woe and disaster to Iraq and the region.

Damascus adheres to its pledge and promise. It is defending pan-Arab rights, and relinquishes not one iota of soil. It places Palestine before the Golan Heights. This principled pan-Arab policy must bear fruit soon, God willing.

Bangladesh

President, Opposition Discuss New Government

BK1803164091 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed invited some political leaders and MP's [members of parliament]-elect to an iftar [meal that breaks Ramadan fast] party at Bangabhavan this evening. Leaders of BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] regretted their inability to attend the party as they had [words indistinct] their own function. The acting president discussed with those present his constitutional obligation to form a council of ministers to advise and assist him in running the government. The acting president informed them that the first session of the newly elected parliament has already been summoned on the fifth of next month.

The leaders referred to the joint declaration of three political alliances of November last which stipulated that the interim government will transfer power only to a sovereign parliament. By this, they said they had meant a parliamentary form of government in place of the existing presidential system under which all powers lie with the president.

The acting president referred to the constitutional provisions which would prevail upon the joint declaration and said his neutrality cannot be questioned so long as he acts according to the Constitution. He reminded them that he will not stay in his present office even for a moment longer than necessary. He further said for changing the Constitution the parties concerned should arrive at a decision. The iftar party was attended, among others, by Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina, party Secretary General Begum Sajedah Chowdhury, party Presidium member Abdus Samad Azad, Workers Party Secretary General Nasir Khan Menon, BAKSAL [Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League] Secretary General Abdur Razzaq, CPB [Communist Party of Bangladesh] leader Saifuddin Manik, Ganotantrik leader Syed Altaf Hussain, and the convener of Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal, Khaliquzzaman.

Ban on Political Assemblies in Dhaka Remains

BK1803161291 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] A press release of Dhaka Metropolitan Police says assembly of five or more people, processions, demonstrations, and carrying and (?use) of arms and ammunition of all kinds remain banned for indefinite period in Gulshan, Banani, and Baridhara areas of the city. The ban was imposed in those areas on the 19th of January last.

Students Demand Early Trial for Ershad

BK1803160991 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] The All Party Students Unity leaders have warned that they will build up a fresh movement to hasten the trial of former President Ershad and his associates for corruption and abuse of power.

At a rally in front of the National Press Club in Dhaka today, they said conspiracies are being hatched to save Ershad and his associates who plundered the country's wealth and killed hundreds of people during the eight years of autocratic rule. The student leaders also urged the political parties to abide by the joint declaration of two alliances in forming the government and to give democracy a solid base. The rally was addressed, among others, by DHAKSU AGS [Dhaka University Students Union Additional General Secretary] Nazimuddin Ahmed, president of Chhatra [students] League, S.A. Sahalan, Secretary General of Chhatra Union Nazir Nasirah Begum, and Secretary General of Chhatra League M.S. Shafi Ahmed.

India

Kuwaiti Official Seeks Reconstruction Cooperation

BK1803041791 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] The Kuwaiti minister of state for cabinet affairs, Dr. 'Abd-al-Rahman al-'Awadi, has said that India has a significant role to play in the reconstruction of his country. He was speaking to newsmen after his arrival at New Delhi Airport last night. Dr. 'Awadi said the purpose of his visit is to thank India for its stand at the United Nations during the Gulf crisis and seek India's cooperation in the reconstruction of Kuwait.

Discusses Issue With President

BK1903002091 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Kuwait has sought India's continued assistance and support for the reconstruction of the emirate. This was conveyed by the special envoy of the Kuwaiti amir, Dr. 'Abd-al-Rahman al-'Awadi, to the president, Mr. R. Venkataraman, when he called on him in New Delhi today. Dr. al-'Awadi reiterated on behalf of his government Kuwait's gratitude for India's support during the period of occupation. Mr. Venkataraman expressed India's happiness at the restoration of independence and the resumption of power by the legitimate government in Kuwait.

Mr. al-'Awadi had a detailed discussion with the deputy minister for external affairs, Mr. Digvijay Singh. Mr. Singh assured the special envoy that India would render all possible help to the people of Kuwait by providing the services of doctors and nurses and medical supplies at short notice.

Further on Prime Minister's News Conference

BK1803104191 Delhi ISI Diplomatic Information Service in English 0920 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Prime minister addressed a gathering of the Foreign Correspondents Association today (15th March) while answering questions on a wide range of domestic issues, PM [prime minister] made the following observations on matters concerning India's foreign policy.

Responding to a question about India's expectations with regard to current crisis in the Soviet Union, PM said that the fate of the Soviet Union would be decided by its own people. India stood for a united, vibrant and strong Soviet Union when asked what India's position should be in a world which was no longer bipolar, PM said that whether one uses the term bipolar or unipolar, it was clear that no one country could hope to dominate the world. It was preferable to have cooperation amongst all nations, whether big or small. In this context, he was glad that President Bush and President Gorbachev were cooperating with each other. It was imperative that neither of the big powers or any other powerful nation should make the mistakes of the past. India would play a friendly role and cooperate with all.

In response to a query about whether India's relations with United States or Soviet Union would witness any change, PM said that he could not speak about the past. He would certainly assert that in the last four months, he had received cordiality and cooperation from both the United States and the Soviet Union. Even with China, relations had shown a marked improvement.

Responding to a question by the TANJUG correspondent, about India's role during the Gulf war in general and specifically on whether his socialist credentials had been marred by his decision to refuel U.S. planes, PM said that in taking the decision, he had merely displayed his patriotic duty. He said that it was an internationally accepted principle that when over flying the air space of foreign countries, customary landing rights were granted. With customary landing rights, refuelling became an automatic process even today, Indian Air Force planes were getting the same facilities from several dozen countries. Despite this accepted international practice with the United States, PM took the additional assurance that only non-lethal equipment would be carried in planes stopping in India and that India's gesture would be seen as a purely humanitarian one. With regard to his socialist credentials, PM said Yugoslavia also considered itself a socialist country, but that this did not inhibit Yugoslavia from cooperating with the USA. PM felt his socialist credentials had not been diluted.

Responding to a question as to whether "arrangements with the Congress-I Party" in November had been based on some "arrangement on Bofors", PM said that there was no arrangement on Bofors. The two parties took the decision together in the national interest responding to an allegation that India had remained silent during the Gulf crisis, PM said that this was utterly untrue. Even two days before war broke, he had written to both President Bush and Gorbachev and to the chairman of NAM [Non-Aligned Movement]. Every avenue had to be explored in an effort to avert war. Several other major countries had made similar efforts, but regrettably like India, they had also failed. Unfortunately, some politicians in India appeared to suffer from an inferiority complex: there was no need for India to take any blame in this regard. India tried very hard to contact Saddam Husayn, but all efforts in this direction failed. India was also in touch with Yemen, Algeria and other countries, but none of these exertions bore any fruit.

Responding to a question on the role of the Pakistani Prime Minister in securing the release mf the kidnapped daughter of Sri Saifudding Soz, PM said that he was not in a position to answer on behalf of the Pakistan prime minister. But he would say that both Pakistani radio and Pakistani television made appeals calling for the release of the kidnapped lady. Elaborating, PM said that he had been impressed when he met Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in Male by the latter's desire to improve relations and reduce tensions. PM said that he had reciprocated the sentiments expressed by the Pakistani prime minister and in this spirit, the foreign secretaries talks which were a routine matter would be held as scheduled.

Luncheon meeting was widely attended by resident correspondents from many countries of the world.

Naval Chief on 'Regional Security Arrangements'

BK1903081091 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] India Navy plans to go in for larger ocean-worthy ships and develop its harbors for supporting its fleet to protect the country's maritime interests and vital offshore energy sources. The chief of the naval staff, Admiral Ram Das, told newsmen in Bombay last night that security in the Indian Ocean region is stable after the Gulf war.

He said India may have to enter into regional security arrangements, besides changing the composition of its naval fleet to safeguard its maritime interests.

Gandhi Promises Stable, Secular Government

BK1803165491 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] The Congress-I president today launched his party's election campaign in Rajasthan at a rally in Ganganagar District. Mr. Gandhi promised the people a stable, secular, and democratic government at the center if his party is voted to power. He also assured them that the party would bring back the economy of the country on the rails, check rising prices, and formulate programs for women and unemployed youth.

Congress-I Opposes State Polls in Assam, Punjab

BK1803164691 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] The Congress-I says that assembly elections cannot be held in Assam without the approval of parliament. Questioned on the issue by newsmen at a briefing in New Delhi today, the party spokesman, Mr. V.N. Gadgil, said as parliament has already extended president's rule in the state, polls can be held only with its approval. The party spokesman announced that the Congress-I has formed election committees in most of the states.

The Punjab Congress-I has expressed itself against holding of simultaneous Lok Sabha and assembly elections in the state. In a statement issued in Chandigarh today, the PCCI-I [Pradesh Congress Committee-I] president, Mr. Beant Singh, said that free and fair elections will not be possible in Punjab due to the prevailing uncertainty and insecurity in the state.

BJP, Janata Dal-S Leaders on Election Issues

BK1803163491 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] The Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] has criticized the performance of the Congress-I and the Janata Dal when they were in power. Speaking at a rally in New Delhi today, the party president, Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, criticized the Rajiv Gandhi and V.P. Singh governments for allegedly dividing the country. He said the BJP stands for national unity and education, employment, and housing for all. Criticizing the trade liberalization policy, Dr. Joshi said multinationals are playing with the nation's economy.

The party leader, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, accused Mr. Rajiv Gandhi of bringing down the Chandra Shekhar government on what he described as a petty issue of surveillance. He promised political stability with social and economic justice if his party comes to power.

The Janata Dal-S has appealed to the BJP not to make the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid [temple-mosque dispute] issue an election issue in the coming polls. The party spokesman, Mr. S.P. Malaviya, told newsmen in New Delhi today that making it an issue will generate communal tension and violence which all political parties should avoid. He said the Janata Dal-S is for construction of the temple in Ayodhya, but it should not be done by demolishing the mosque.

Asked if his party rules out an alliance with the BJP, the spokesman said he cannot say anything about the matter right now. Mr. Malaviya said Dr. Subramaniam Swamy will have discussions with the AIADMK [All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazagham] leader, Ms. Jayalalitha, in Madras in the next two days on possible electoral adjustments between the two parties.

Sikh 'Militant' Among 20 Killed in Punjab

BK1703001491 Hong Kong AFP in English 1723 GMT 16 Mar 91

[Text] New Delhi, March 16 (AFP)—A Sikh militant wanted for more than 200 murders was among 20 people killed in separatist-linked violence in the northern state of Punjab, the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) said Saturday.

Satnam Singh of the hard-line Dashmesh regiment militant group was killed and his deputy, Sugga Singh, escaped when their associates ambushed police officers escorting them to a prison in Majitha town Friday night, PTI said.

The hardcore Sikh militant and his second-in-command, who had been arrested earlier in the day, had reportedly promised police to disclose the location of the regiment's secret armoury. They were ambused by an unspecified number of regiment members.

Mr. Satnam Singh, wanted for more than 200 murders in the Punjab towns of Majitha, Tarn Taran and Batala and carrying a reward of 28,000 dollars for his arrest, was shot several times in the two-hour gunbattle, Majitha Police Chief S.P. Gill said. He did not specify whether Mr. Satnam Singh had been killed by police or militants' gunfire.

In another incident, militants fired a high-explosive rocket at a passenger train in Ludhiana District Friday night, but it overshot the crowded carriages and exploded after hitting a tree, PTI said. Nineteen more people, including half a dozen militants and a police constable, were killed in a number of related incidents across the northern state late Friday and Saturday, the agency said.

The latest deaths take to 840 the number of people killed in violence linked with the bloody campaign for an independent Sikh homeland called Khalistan, or land of the pure, in Punjab so far this year.

Police Suspect 'Militants' Behind Delhi Bombing

BK1803155891 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] One person was killed and three injured in a powerful bomb blast in a restaurant in Connaught Place in New Delhi this afternoon. Out of the injured persons admitted in the Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital, two were discharged after first aid. According to the police, the bomb was placed in a toilet on the first floor of the restaurant. The glass panes and walls were badly damaged. The police said the cause of the blast is being investigated, but they do not rule out the possibility of the involvement of militants in this.

Remote Sensing Satellite '90 Percent' Successful

BK1803030891 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] The Indian remote sensing satellite has achieved a 90 percent success in identifying prospective ground water sites in Gujarat. This was stated by a scientist of the physical research laboratory in Ahmadabad. He said that the remote sensing technology has greatly helped in providing information about the country's renewable and nonrenewable resources.

Iran

Golpayegani Surprised at Silence on Iraqi Crimes

LD1803151791 Tehran IRNA in English 1414 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Arak (Central Prov.), Mar. 18 IRNA—Grand Ayatollah Seyyed Mohammad Reza Golpayegani today expressed surprise over the mute silence of international forums towards the "crimes of the Iraqi regime" against the Iraqi people who seek their freedom, independence, and legitimate rights.

Ayatollah Golpayegani in his message following the desecration of the holy shrines in Karbala' and al-Najaf, and the massacre of the defenceless people by armed units of the government, said: "in fact the sanctity of Islam and the holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) [peace be upon him] has been insulted," by these acts.

"The Iraqi ruler (Saddam Husayn) who caused irreparable destruction to the Muslim nations of Iraq and Kuwait, has now subjected the Iraqi Muslims to merciless attacks, wreaking vengeance upon a people who have already suffered all types of calamities," the ayatollah said.

The Islamic Republic is observing a day of public mourning today following the assault on the holy shrine of Imam 'Ali (PBUH) in al-Najaf and that of his two sons Imam Husayn and 'Abol Fadl al-'Abbas (PBUT) [peace be upon them] in Karbala' by the Iraqi Government using helicopter gunships and long range artillery.

The desecration of the holy sites by the Iraqi Government also left hundreds of casualties.

Says Saddam Insults Islam

LD1803224491 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 2030 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Statement by Grand Ayatollah Golpayegani—read by announcer]

[Text] In the name of the compassionate, the merciful. The heart-rending and catastrophic situation in the Muslim country of Iraq, and the savage attacks by the Ba'thist criminals is more evidence of the crimes of the traitor Saddam. After all the shows of bravery and story telling and not heeding the warnings of Muslim leaders in the war, after he gave the excuse for starting the war, after inflicting irreparable damage on the Muslim nations of Iraq and Kuwait and committing numerous crimes, the ruler of Iraq has been defeated and has yielded to foreigners. He sees that all exits are closed. He has cruelly attacked the risen Muslims of Iraq and has indulged in massacring the people and destroying the country. He is taking his revenge on the people who suffered all kinds of catastrophe during his reign. Words cannot describe the crimes committed against the people of Iraq.

The audacity of the ruler of Iraq, who has no respect for any religious principles or international regulations, has reached such heights that, according to information received, he has attacked the holy cities of al-Najaf and Karbala', as well as defenseless people. He has become so blatant that he has desecrated the holy shrines of his holiness the lord of the martyrs and his honorable brother His Holiness 'Abol Fadl al-'Abbas, peace be upon them. In fact, he has insulted Islam, the lofty prophet of God, peace and God's mercy be upon him and his clan, and all Muslims.

It is surprising that the international community has remained silent in the face of all these crimes committed by the Ba'thist regime of Iraq against the people who seek independence, freedom and their legitimate rights. [Tehran Domestic Service in Persian at 0430 GMT on 19 March carries a two-minute report on the statement by Grand Ayatollah Golpayegani. This version is identical to the first referent version, except for supplying the following paragraph in place of the preceding one: The Qom Religious Seminary expresses its condolences to the Imam of the Ages, may our souls be sacrificed to him, to the religious scholars, to the religious seminaries and especially the holy al-Najaf Religious Seminary, and to the Muslims of the world.]

In this holy month of Ramadan, religious scholars, honorable preachers, and the Muslim nation are expected to show their disgust for insults to the holy places, the massacre of Muslims, the continuing oppression and injustice of the Ba'thist rulers against the Iraqi nation, and the presence of foreign forces. They should not begrudge their Muslim brothers any form of assistance.

I pray to God Almighty for the victory of Islam and Muslims and the destruction of the enemies of Islam. Peace and God's mercy be upon you.

Iraq Should Pay Reparations for Eight-Year War

NC1703093591 Paris AFP in English 0928 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, March 17 (AFP)—Iraq should first pay reparations to Iran for the 1980-1988 Gulf war before compensating Kuwait for the latest conflict in the region, an influential Iranian newspaper said Sunday.

"Today that Iraq is seemingly to pay war reparations, it has to first pay Iran for its eight years of aggression started by its invasion in 1980, inflicting over 600 billion dollars of losses and damages," Tehran Times said. [sentence as received]

"And Kuwait, invaded August 1989, stands next after Iran."

The paper said in an editorial that the Iranian Foreign Ministry would use all diplomatic means "to guarantee Tehran's rights," in keeping with United Nations Security Council Resolution 598.

A cease-fire was declared in the Iran-Iraq war in August 1988, after both countries accepted the resolution. But the question of which country initiated the conflict has not yet been resolved.

"The Security Council should refrain from issuing any resolutions entitling only Kuwait to receive war reparations," said the Tehran daily, which is close to the government.

Desecration of Iraqi Holy Shrines Condemned

Khamene'i Issues Statement

LD1803165991 Tehran IRIB Television Network in Persian 1600 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Following the bloody incidents in Iraq and the tragedies inflicted on the Iraqi nation and country, the bureau of His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, leader of the Islamic Revolution, issued the following statement:

In His exalted name. [passage omitted] The bloody incidents in Iraq and the repeated suffering of that innocent nation both in the hands of the aggressor multinational forces and later the cruel and unjust Ba'athists are a cause for deep sorrow, regret, and sympathy to the honorable nation of Iran.

The attacks on the holy cities of al-Najaf and Karbala', and the desecration of the holy shrine of His Holiness the Lord of the Pious [Imam 'Ali], peace be upon him, and also the noble shrines of His Holiness Imam Husayn and His Holiness 'Abol Fadl al-'Abbas, peace be upon them, have increasingly upset everyone and revealed the depth of the crimes committed against the Iraqi nation and country and the enmity against Islamic holies.

We express our condolences to His Holiness the Guardian of God [Imam Mahdi] and the Muslim nation for these catastrophes, and announce that for that occasion there be mourning services held on behalf of the leader of the Islamic revolution, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, between 1500 and 1700 on Tuesday 19 March at Shahid Motahhari school. The presence of the Hezbollahi ummah would gladden the heart of the Almighty, and would honor the lofty position of those martyrs.

Official Summons Iraqi Charge

LD1803172191 Tehran IRIB Television Network in Persian 1600 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Mr. Sheykh-ol-Eslam, the deputy foreign minister for Arab and African affairs, summoned the Iraqi charge d'affaires this afternoon and handed him a letter of protest about the desecration of holy places in Iraq by that country's Armed Forces.

The letter expresses the deep regret and protest of the Muslim government and nation of Iran about the insults to the holy places in al-Najaf and Karbala'.

Damage to Shrines 'Unforgivable'

LD1803122791 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1055 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Today has been declared a day of public mourning by the leader of the Islamic revolution. In part, the statement published by the esteemed leader's office declares: In view of the insult and violation against the holy shrines in blessed al-Najaf and Karbala', today is declared a day of public mourning.

From the start of the popular uprising in southern Iraq, which spread rapidly to the central and northern cities of that country, the Iraqi regime continues to use all means of suppression in order to compensate for its shame arising from the defeat in the war against the allies. Napalm bombs, suffocating gases, tanks, artillery, and helicopters are among the devices used in this suppression. Large-scale massacres, including the massacre of between 12,000 and 16,000 people along the Karbala'-al-Najaf road, are clear examples of the savagery of the Iraqi regime.

Meanwhile, in order to escape from the truth, the Baghdad regime—which is faced with the collapse in morale of the Army and an extensive popular uprising—claims that foreign forces have had a hand in instigating the uprising. But all news sources stress that the uprising of the Iraqi people was instigated from within, and that it is a response to totalitarian rule and the continuing military and political defeats of the policies of that country, which were only detrimental to the people.

Currently, all the people of Iraq are suffering from suppression and massacre. Insult and damage to Islamic holy shrines, however, are unforgivable sins. There are many examples of the failure of regimes in the suppression of people in the Middle East. In occupied Palestine, a regime much more suppressive than the one in Iraq has been shedding the blood of totally unarmed people for over three years, but the uprising continues. Regional political experts believe that, considering the differences in grounds and conditions, the Iraqi regime may also use any means for the suppression of the people. It can never destroy the people, however, or burn their roots. The

people's dissatisfaction and opposition will surface in later stages, and with other motives.

Presently, noting the speech of that country's president last Saturday, the regime in Iraq is preparing to carry out more massacres. But one can still say that the best solution is to answer to the wishes of the people and the uprising. Even if Saddam managed to attract the thoughts of a part of the people at the start of the second Persian Gulf war, he currently, alongside the shameful military defeat, resembles a genocidal element. He will not find anyone to support him.

Khamene'i Says Saddam 'Cannot Remain for Long'

LD1803171191 Tehran IRNA in English 1531 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, Mar. 18, IRNA—The leader of the Islamic revolution said on Monday that the existence of Iraqi President Saddam (Husayn) is "dangerous and detrimental to the Islamic movement and to the interests of Muslims."

Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i also predicted that "Saddam cannot remain in power for long and the continuation of his rule is impossible because of the arms which have fallen into the hands of people."

"We hope that an Islamic and truly popular government based on the wishes of the innocent people of Iraq will come to power in that country," the leader told a group of visiting leaders of Lebanese and Palestinian organizations.

Ayatollah Khamene'i said "Washington's presence in the region has served to pose a great danger to it in the long-run and this will destroy the U.S...The presence of the Americans will cost them more dearly than their presence in Lebanon." He said the Iranian people's attention to their divine goal and their spurning of (big) powers explains the annoyance and hostility of the U.S. and its Western allies towards Islamic Iran.

The leader of the Islamic revolution made it clear "the Islamic system in Iran moves according to its religious duty. We will do whatever we consider our relgious task even if the whole world opposes it. And we will avoid doing something if we do not consider it a religious duty even though the whole world agrees to it. The policy of the Islamic revolution has always been based on this principle."

Terms U.S. Presence in Gulf 'Ineffectual'

LD1803182191 Tehran IRIB Television Network in Persian 1600 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, the leader of the Islamic revolution, today separately received several leaders of Muslim and combative Palestinian and Lebanese groups. While giving them certain instructions, he said that to overcome the enemies of Islam it is necessary for the faithful to be aware of truths and realities of the contemporary world, not to fear death and not to be concerned with worldly goods.

During the meeting with the leaders of Islamic Jihad movement of Palestine, the leader of the Islamic revolution stressed the importance of supporting the Islamic uprising of the oppressed and Muslim people of Palestine in the occupied lands. He added that one of the most important issues in Islam is that Muslim intellectuals and combatants should be able to find the Islamic front and correctly assess its situation. Awareness of current facts and being ready to sacrifice one's life are two determining factors for attaining victory. If the faithful were to attain these two qualities, America and her like would be far too feeble to be able to stand up to Muslims.

His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i gave assurances that America's presence in the Persian Gulf region was ineffectual in helping the Zionist regime. He said that America's presence in the region has brought about a great long-term threat to her, which will destroy America. The presence of the Americans in this region will cost them considerably more than their presence in Lebanon did.

The leader of the Islamic revolution said that the movement of the Islamic system of Iran is based on religious duty. He added that we shall carry out our religious duty even if the whole world opposes it. If we think something is not our religious duty, even if the whole world is for it, we will not do it. The course of action of the Islamic revolution and the Islamic Republic of Iran has always been based on that principle. We have always believed in helping the people and combatants of Palestine as a religious duty, and have always carried this out.

He attributed the displeasure and hostility of America and her Western allies against Islamic Iran to the attention paid by the Muslim people of Iran to their divine goals and their disregard for the power. He called on the leaders of the Islamic Jihad movement of Palestine to strengthen the spirit of struggle and self-sacrifice of the Palestinian people in the occupied lands coupled with broadmindedness and awareness of facts.

Also, during a meeting with Ahmad Jibril and a number of other leaders of the National Liberation Front of Palestine, his eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i referred to jihad and practical motivation as an asset. He said the Palestinian people have set their hearts on a place where jihad is staged seriously and acted upon. We think that paying attention to the Palestinian issue is our duty. We shall support the Islamic revolution of Palestine to the best of our ability. Every day this uprising continues in the occupied lands bears witness to the impotence and weakness of the regime occupying Jerusalem and its allies. Therefore, through the increasing strengthening of the Islamic movement of Palestine the usurper regime of Jerusalem can be put under more and more pressure and dealt blows.

In another part of his speech, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i described the presence of Saddam in the region as dangerous for the Islamic movement and the interests of the Muslims. He said that we predict that Saddam cannot last long in Iraq. Because of the weapons

in the hands of the people, his government cannot survive. We hope that a government which is Islamic, truly popular and based on the wishes of the innocent people of Iraq is established in that country.

According to reports, during the meeting with the leaders of Lebanese Hizballah, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i expressed his gladness about the alleviation of the disputes in that country. He issued some instructions to them to maintain the interests of Islam and the Muslims. During each meeting, the leaders of the combative Palestinian and Lebanese groups submitted reports to the leader of the Islamic revolution on the developments and situation in their regions.

President Meets Hizballah, Jihad, PFLP-GC

LD1803174691 Tehran IRNA in English 1458 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, Mar. 18, IRNA—Secretary General of the Lebanese Hizballah Shaykh Subhi al-Tufayli briefed President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani on the latest developments in Lebanon, here today. The president stressed unity and integrity among the Muslim and combatant forces of Lebanon against the Zionist regime, and expressed satisfaction with the current in that country.

Fathi al-Shaqaqi, an official from the Islamic Jihad and Sa'id Barakah, an exiled Palestinian 'alim [scholar] also had separate meetings with Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani today. "Thousands of real Muslims who consider themselves the children of the Islamic revolution of Iran, are now ready for jihad and martyrdom until the liberation of al-Quds," al-Shaqaqi said. President Hashemi-Rafsanjani hailed the Islamic movement and the intifadah in occupied Palestine against the Zionist war machine as "the greatest epic of the contemporary era."

He said although the U.S. and other arrogant forces are plotting to extinguish the "sacred flame" of the Islamic movement of Palestinian people, "the Islamic Republic of Iran will stand by the Palestinian combatants with all its heart."

In yet another meeting today, the president received leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [General Command] Ahmad Jibril, who gave a detailed report on the situation inside occupied Palestine, as well as on the Palestinian combatant forces in different countries. He called for further cooperation and assistance of the Islamic Republic of Iran regarding the issue of Palestine.

Iraq's Acts Against Uprising Criticized

LD1803190791 Tehran IRIB Television Network in Persian 1645 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Unattributed commentary]

[Excerpts] The shocking tragedy of desecration of the holy shrines in al-Najaf and lofty Karbala', and the Iraqi Ba'thist regime's attack on the sacred sanctuaries of God's imams, peace be upon them all, and the massacre of the Muslim and defenseless people were mourned by our people today.

The military forces loyal to the ruling regime launched their attack on the holy places at a time when a large number of civilians—including women, children, and old men—had sought refuge in these sacred sanctuaries; and a large number of the wounded were bed-ridden inside the holy shrines.

Other reports indicate that a popular convoy, comprising 12,000 to 16,000 men, women, and children, who were fleeing the bloody situation in Karbala' to go to al-Najaf, were rolled into dust and blood along the Karbala'-al-Najaf highway by air and land attacks of the Ba'thist forces. [passage omitted]

Analysts believe the Iraqi regime intends to make up for its disgraceful foreign war by gaining a decisive and bloody victory over its own people inside Iraq. In his first formal speech after the Persian Gulf war, the president of Iraq, instead of apologizing to the Iraqi people for his disastrous adventurist policies which ruined Iraq and left tens of thousands of dead and wounded among Iraqi troops and civilians, threatened the people that he would strongly crush their uprising. He also blamed foreign elements, who have allegedly infiltrated from across the borders, for the countrywide popular uprising.

The extensive uprising, which has spread to most areas of the southern, central, and northern provinces of Iraq, clearly demonstrates that the current developments in Iraq originate from a large-scale popular uprising and its roots lie in the wrong policies of 23 years of Ba'th rule in Iraq. The problem facing the Iraqi regime rose from the embers of wrath hidden under ashes for years and erupted into an immense volcano today.

If the Iraqi regime has been unwilling or incapable so far of understanding the reality and the extent of this movement, it should at least realize the depth of this eruption from the huge number of troops and amount of equipment it has deployed to smash the movement. The Iraqi leaders, therefore, instead of seeking the roots of the uprising outside their borders, should search through their own policies and achievements.

During the oil war, in order to mobilize the public opinion of the Islamic world, the Iraqi regime claimed that the multinational forces had attacked Karbala' and al-Najaf. This was also an attempt to show the extent of the treachery of the coalition forces. How can it now justify opening intense artillery and missile fire on Karbala' and al-Najaf, without the slightest respect for Islamic world's public opinion?

The Iraqi regime must understand its situation, its bleak foreign and domestic prospects and reconsider its policies vis-a-vis the people. For even if the Iraqi regime were to crush the people's current uprising in a bloody manner, thanks to the meaningful silence of the major powers and the international forums, the public opinion of the Islamic world and international cirumstances will not allow the continuation of such a course. It would be better for the Iraqi regime to reconcile with the people and submit to the national will of the Muslim people of Iraq.

Daily Comments on 'Popular Uprising' in Iraq

NC1803141391 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 7 Mar 91 p 2

[Commentary: "The Popular Uprising and the Future of Iraq"]

[Text] The popular uprising in Iraq, which has now spread to many cities in the north and south of that country, has started a new phase in the region. This uprising, as far as can be gleaned from news and information, is based on the people themselves and on no foreign country. Reports indicate that what is happening in many Iraqi cities and namely in al-Basrah, al-'Amarah, Khanaqin, al-Najaf, Karbala', al-Kut, Nasiriyah, Samawah, al-Sulaymaniyah, and other cities is a spontaneous movement created by the people because of the extreme weakness of the ruling regime and the feeling among the people that the opportunity has now risen for them to declare their demands and wants.

Meanwhile, as the United Nations and other international forums remain indifferent to the massacre of the Iraqi people by the Republican Guard, news agencies and Western mass media report increasing efforts to attribute this movement to the Islamic Republic of Iran. And, apparently, this propaganda is pursuing objectives in complete conformity with the West's longstanding wishes on a multi-faceted effort to gain control of the regimes in the Persian Gulf and to suppress any spontaneous popular Islamic movement. Therefore, being alert to the West's plots to exploit the chaos in Iraq is of extreme importance and should not be neglected in the assessments of political and propaganda officials.

Many believe that the West does not attach any importance to Saddam now, and that even if he is completely disarmed and made harmless, he will still lack the necessary conditions for remaining in power in Baghdad for long. On this basis, the West is definitely looking for a regime to replace the Baghdad regime. But can one believe that the West will agree to the coming to power of popular and Islamic rule in Iraq that will have emerged from the people's spontaneous movement?

Even though the answer to this question is undoubtedly negative, nevertheless it does not mean that under the current chaotic situation in Iraq, the West sides with Saddam and prefers him over a popular Islamic rule. The Westerners and their regional allies, among which are the Al Sa'ud and Al Sabah families, have in mind a series of compositions that can be brought to power in Iraq and that can—in their opinion—be tolerated; and as long as these compositions exist, they will not agree to rule by anyone else. It was announced some time ago that the Al Sa'ud family is trying to determine a new rule for Iraq. It is said that this effort is now complete and that a diverse composition of elements such as Hasan Mustafa Naqib (retired Iraqi military official), Tahsin Ma'lah, Sa'd Salih Jabr, 'Uthman Samirra'i, Salah 'Umar 'Ali, and Shaykh 'Ali 'Aziz have been taken into consideration.

In view of these points, it is necessary to study the prediction by some observers of regional affairs on how the West will handle the current chaos in Iraq. This prediction is that the West, headed by America, is pursuing three objectives in the incidents in Iraq today. The first phase is the suppression of Islamic-popular forces by Saddam. The second is the overthrow of Saddam, who is now considered by public opinion as a criminal who cannot be forgiven for the massacre of his own people. And finally, the third phase is the bringing to power of a regime favored by the West and by regional forces of reaction. This prediction gains more strength when we look at the fact that the West has refrained from reacting to the massacre of the Iraqi people by the Republican Guard.

It seems that this is the most favorable situation for the West, the situation it wants in Iraq so that it can seize the opportunity to use any means to safeguard its illegitimate interests in the Persian Gulf. There is no doubt that if a disarmed Saddam, who surrenders to the West in every way, remains in power, this can also ensure these same interests. But who does not know that after the oil war, Saddam no longer has the necessary qualities to stay in power, even for a short period?

In view of all this, since popular movements always win over political and military measures by governments and change the course of history in spite of the will of governments, Iraq's future cannot now be predicted accurately. But who knows? Maybe it is God's will that despite all the efforts by the satanic powers and their regional satellites, the Iraqi people will be able to gain control of their destiny at this juncture in history. And God's will is above all wills.

Further Press Comment

NC1803154691 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 11 Mar 91 p 11

[Editorial: "Why Does World Arrogance Believe the Iraqi People's Uprising Is From Outside Iraq?"]

[Excerpts] The continuing clashes between the people and the pro-Saddam forces have inspired apprehension in the United States and Israel. According to a British expert, "Israel recently informed the United States that it may be better if Saddam remains in power. Similarly, the Saudis will be very disturbed if an Islamic government from Iran comes into power in Iraq. This will also

cause fear and concern in the oil-rich Arab countries of the Persian Gulf, as well as in Turkey."

Since the United States and Israel are, in general, enemies of Islam, any Islamic development makes them indignant and troubled. They continue to say these movements are caused by "extraneous elements" so as to justify any means of repression.

Even though the White House and its supporters had clearly expressed support for toppling Saddam—and had even made plans for potential successors—when the clashes between the popular forces and pro-Saddam forces began, and the Islamic leaning of the uprising became apparent, they began to retreat on their declared stance.

This is a common tradition of world arrogance that if a popular uprising is not in their interests, it is condemned and its suppression welcomed. If, however, such movements could be channeled to the benefit of its illicit interests, it is defended as "the rightful will of the people." A prime example is the case of the Soviet Baltic republics. [passage omitted]

The aspirations of the Palestinian people are relatively stronger and more principled than the wishes of the people of the Baltic republics. However, because in the former instance the interests of world arrogance are endangered, the massacre of the people by the despotic Zionists is consistently and overtly approved by the White House. In order to justify the massacre of the Palestinians, the United States deems it as something from outside the boundaries, and does not believe it to be too dangerous. [passage omitted]

The Iraqi Government has recently been harmed by arrogance, and if it wants to jeer at it, it needs to put aside any repression of the people and take steps to make peace with them by submitting to their demands. This is the best way.

Tehran Daily on Regional Security Guidelines

NC1703133291 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 6 Mar 91 pp 1, 2

[Editorial: "Some Observations Regarding the New Regional Security System"]

[Excerpts] The internal situation in Iraq is extremely tense but the Western mass media are striving to highlight the anti-Saddam clashes in an attempt to overshadow more important events, one of which is the issue of the regional security system. The allies, and Washington in particular, are rushing to capitalize on the disturbed conditions in the region with the swift imposition of a regional security system tailored to their wishes. [passage omitted]

All facts and figures show that the West's objective in propounding a new security system in the region is based on two considerations:

1. To ensure the export of oil from the region.
2. To ensure the security of countries that can provide an appropriate foothold in the region for the West.

These two considerations lack, in particular, any mention of the apparatus or main objectives required for ensuring real security in the region. [passage omitted]

The question is, if the domain of U.S. national security extends to Persian Gulf waters and regional countries, then where are the boundaries of the national security of the countries and people of this region? Are the powers of world arrogance not prepared to officially recognize the future phenomenon called the "domain of the national security of countries and people of the region?" With their overt and covert intervention, they paved the way for the creation and proliferation of a crisis wherever their interests demanded it.

The instigation of the imposed war against Iran and the multilateral investment by the Eastern and Western powers of world arrogance in the war is a clear manifestation of such a policy.

Another dimension of the same policy demanded the crushing and suppression of the crisis when the interests of those same oppressive powers were perceived to be in serious danger. The oil war and the hasty Western onslaught to destroy the Iraqi war machine is the clearest example. [passage omitted]

As long as the root causes of the crisis in the region in the past decade remain unidentified and as long as efforts are not made to eradicate them, propounding any kind of security plans—however honest, logical, and principled—will be doomed to failure and defeat, or at least, will not be very effective.

How can we eradicate the real roots of the crisis in the region? Accomplishing this duty can only be possible with perseverance in making decisions and a sensitivity in identifying these problems right at their roots, and independence of action and decisionmaking.

Some main factors can be listed as follows:

1. The issue of establishing regional security is the most integral and immutable right of the people and countries of the region, and attaining it is part of the responsibility, right, and obligation of the countries of the region. In this regard, only those countries with a coastline on the Persian Gulf should be the ones to decide and to participate.
2. The real roots of all difficulties in the region, both past and present, stem from the presence of foreigners. Allowing them to participate in the regional security system and even to prepare the ground for the infiltration of their influence will render regional security liable to obstructionism, interference, and pressure, and will result in the chronic and permanent existence of crises.

It is imperative, therefore, that all efforts to impose the ideas and intervention on the part of the powers of arrogance should be thwarted.

3. The United States and all the arrogant powers are seeking to legitimize their military presence in the region by incorporating and imposing their role in a new security structure. The despotic presence in the region of the military forces of the enemies of Islam in the heartland of the oil-rich areas of the world of Islam should never, under any circumstances, be permitted to assume legitimacy.
4. The oil wealth belongs to the regional nations, and any decisions, measures, or opinions that characterize the oil as part of interests of the enemies of Islam, or project the oil-rich territories of the world of Islam as part of the domain of the national security of these enemies of Islam is primarily an effort to resuscitate the oppressive powers' abhorrent domination over the region in a different guise, and is, of course, unacceptable.

Naturally, the arrogant powers should accept the truth, change their attitude, and behave as the purchaser of oil, not its owner. [passage omitted]

Silence, compromise, or reneging on the clear approach to ensure the security and interests of the nations and countries of the region will certainly initiate a new era of permanent insecurity for the nations that are the rightful owners of the oil. Naturally, it is these nations and people who should feel a sense of responsibility in this regard and who should be able correctly to defend their interests and security and to rest assured that, in view of their aggressive nature, the arrogant powers will continue to strive for domination. The nations of the region are the ones who should resist such despicable domination, and a starting point would be to formulate a new system of security for themselves.

Kurdish Deputy Calls for Revolt Against Saddam

LD1903112391 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0450 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Speech by Kurdish Deputy Zarin-Gul, from Sannandaj, at the open session of the Majles in Tehran on 19 March—live]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. [passage omitted] O you Muslim Kurdish nation of Iraq! O you zealous Kurds! The time has come for you to take revenge on Saddam and the Ba'th party, for those children who lost their fathers, and those mothers who lost their children in Halabjah. The cry for revenge is still heard from every inch of Halabjah territory. As our deceased imam had promised, Saddam will go. Fight the forces of blasphemy without the slightest hesitation, for God has promised victory to the oppressed.

I call on the Kurdish forces to join their brothers as soon as possible, and by uniting with the Islamic groups, placing their trust in the Almighty, and making the Islamic Revolution of Iran their role model—without relying on, or pinning their hopes on East and West—stifle the last gasps of Saddam and the Ba'th Party, in their chests, under the banner of" There is no God but God. [passage omitted]

I express my gratitude to the eminent leader for declaring a day of mourning in solidarity with the defenseless Iraqi people, and I expect the martyr-nurturing nation to participate in the memorial service given by the eminent leader between 1500 and 1700 at Martyr Motahhari School today. [passage omitted]

I request the honorable special clerical court not to allow those persons who have been waging conspiracies against the Kurdish Muslim clerics in Kurdistan to continue their conspiracies.

Majles Deputies Condemn Suppression in Iraq

LD1903133491 Tehran IRNA in English 1244 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, Mar. 19, IRNA—A letter signed by 160 parliamentarians Tuesday strongly condemned the Baghdad government for suppressing the popular uprising in Iraq.

The letter, read at the open session of the Majles, also hailed the leader of the Islamic revolution, Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i, for his "decisive" reaction to the Iraqi regime's crimes.

Condemning the U.S. and Iraq's Ba'th Party for their "dangerous policies", the deputies called on the Iraqi Army to stop killing people and instead join their rank.

Monday, March 18, was declared a day of mourning in Iran in protest to the attacks by the Iraqi Army on the holy Islamic sites in al-Najaf and Karbala'.

U.S. Said To Benefit From Continued Saddam Rule

NC1803164891 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 9 Mar 91 p 1

[Editorial by Dr. Mohammad Javad Larijani, adviser to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: "What Does the United States Want From Saddam?"]

[Text] 1. What matters to the Washington echelons is promoting the interests of the United States; individuals are of no consequence. Therefore, the issue for them is not whether Saddam stays or goes, but what effects his ouster from or continuation in power will have on the United States. Whether Saddam wants to indulge in massacres, whether he rejects "democracy," and other similar matters are not what impedes cordial relations with the United States .

2 In its letter of unconditional surrender, the Iraqi regime showed that the only thing that matters to it is its "continuation." To achieve this, Saddam can accept that he will not arm himself, that he will pay heavy reparations, and that he will let a part of Iraq remain at the disposal of the United States for an indefinite period (as

a guarantee of the agreements!) What is most important is that Iraq, as it gradually regains control, will be occupied with grappling with its problems for decades, and so will not pose any threat to the friends of the United States.

If they remain in power, the Iraqi officials can also assure Washington that there will be a massacre of Muslims and this interests them greatly. Is it not enough that the Baghdad regime remains in power for these reasons? Certainly not! There is one more task the Baghdad regime should perform: the consolidation of Israel! Now it is time for this important matter as well!

3. What can Saddam's regime do to consolidate Israel? Saddam can officially recognize Israel and initiate direct talks with it. This will enable Saddam to join the present group of eight, and so there will be two countries in this group that have direct relations with Israel: Iraq and Egypt. This will mean ties with the other members of the group in the near future. This is the most important political goal for the United States after Iraq's humiliation in Kuwait.

I cannot see any obstacle facing the Baghdad regime in this regard. This regime has become so disgraced that such actions are all the same for it! It appears that everything that is happening behind the scenes nowadays can be seen in this light.

Cabinet Introduces Two New Governors General

LD1703222791 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Excerpts] The cabinet met this evening. In the course of the meeting President Hashemi-Rafsanjani—who had gone to Bakhtaran and Khuzestan Provinces in order to meet the war-stricken people of these two provinces and inspect the reconstruction work progress—stressed the need for speeding up reconstruction work and urged all the executive organs to intensify their efforts to the maximum level possible. [passage omitted]

Also during today's session of the cabinet, Mr. Mahmud Sharifiani and Mr. Qorban 'Ali Sa'adat were introduced as the governors general of Zanjan and Western Azerbaijan respectively. The cabinet also paid tribute to Mr. Musavi, the former governor general of Zanjan; and honored the memory of the late 'Ata'i, former governor general of Western Azerbaijan Province.

Velayati Meets Italian Official; Reiterates Views

LD1903115491 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Mr. Claudio Lenochi, the Italian deputy foreign minister who is currently visiting Iran, met and conferred with Mr. Velayati, Iran's minister of foreign affairs, this morning. According to a central news unit report, while expressing his gratitude for the Islamic Republic of Iran's peaceful efforts in the course of the Persian Gulf crisis and the significance of that issue from the viewpoint of the international forums, the Italian minister emphasized the irrefutable key role of the Islamic Republic of Iran in maintaining the security and the stability of the region.

Mr. Velayati, while expressing his satisfaction at the growing trend of relations and the politico-economic relations between the two countries, said: The countries of the Persian Gulf region would like to deepen and expand cooperations with the Islamic Republic of Iran, to which end they have taken practical and effective steps.

Remarking on the hardship inflicted on the Iraqi nation in the past 10 years, for instance the imposition of two destructive wars by that country's regime, Mr. Velayati described the internal situation in Iraq as worrying. He emphasized the need for human solidarity of the international forums with the uprising of the innocent Muslim Iraqi nation. He also reaffirmed Iran's condemnation of the Iraqi people's massacre, stressing that the determination of Iraq's destiny is the exclusive right of the Muslim Iraqi nation, which should be done without any foreign intervention.

100 IRGC Commanders, Officials Receive Promotion

LD1703221591 Tehran IRIB Television Network in Persian 1600 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Excerpt] One hundred commanders and officials of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps [IRGC] were today awarded the rank of second brigadier general [sartip-dovvum]. The awards were made during a ceremony held in the presence of Messrs. Firuzabadi, chief of staff of the Armed Forces, Commander Major General Reza'i, commander in chief of the IRGC, and Rear Admiral Shamkhani, commander of the Navy of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Army. [passage omitted]

WHO Official Inspects Iraqi Refugee Camps

Director General Arrives

NC1503094691 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Text] Mr. Hiroshi Nakajima, director general of the World Health Organization [WHO], accompanied by Mr. Hoseyn Aljazayeri, head of the WHO's Eastern Mediterranean section, arrived in Tehran this morning to inspect Iraqi refugee camps in Iran. He was welcomed by Minister of Health Mr. Malekzadeh. The WHO director general is to inspect a number of Iraqi refugee camps in the south of our country.

Sees President, Iraqi Refugees

LD1703174791 Tehran IRIB Television Network in Persian 1600 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani today received Mr. Nakajima, the head of the World Health Organization. In the course of this meeting, the WHO director

thanked the Islamic Republic of Iran [IRI] for its stance toward the Persian Gulf issue, praised the Iranian Government's humanitarian and philanthropic assistance to the refugees, and said: We believe the international organizations have a heavy burden of responsibility for the issue of the refugees and reconstruction of the damage caused by the eight-year war in Iran, and they should fulfill their responsibility.

Referring to his observation of the devastation caused by the war in Abadan and Khorramshahr, he said: The Security Counil and the international organizations should attach the same degree of importance to the reconstruction of Khorramshahr and Abadan as they attach to reconstruction of Kuwait.

While expressing concern for the situation inside Iraq, referring to the wounded who have sought refuge in Iran lately, he said: I closely saw the children whose faces are burned and wounded by napalm bombs, and I am grateful to the IRI Government for the special attention it is paying to these wounded people. I have compiled a full report during this visit, which I shall submit to the UN secretary general. I hope that effective steps will be taken, through international dynamism, toward removing the oil pollution in the Persian Gulf and reconstruction of the devastation in the entire region.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, in reply said: The comprehensive attention that the WHO has paid to the negative effects of the existing situation in the Persian Gulf and its concern for the people's suffering are a source of assurance for us, and we support it. His Excellency added: The IRI has always faced such problems during the past several years, which were created for us by our neighbours; and we have always tried to perform our humanitarian and Islamic duties in the best possible manner.

While expressing concern for the situation inside Iraq, the people's difficulties, and the possibility of large-scale migration of that country's defenseless people, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani expressed the hope that the Iraqi people's suffering would end as soon as possible.

Departs, Calls Talks 'Useful'

NC1803081291 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0330 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Mr. Hiroshi Nakajima, director general of the World Health Organization [WHO], left Tehran this morning after a two-day visit to our country. Before leaving Tehran, he told our correspondent at Mehrabad Airport that his talks with the president, and the ministers of health and of higher education were useful and constructive.

The WHO director general also referred to his inspection of the Iraqi refugee camps in Khuzestan and, while expressing gratitude for the Islamic Republic of Iran for attending to these refugees, he noted that this important issue should receive extensive international assistance.

Yazdi Says UK 'Spy' Will Serve Sentence

LD1703134191 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Text] A meeting of judiciary officials was held before noon today under the chairmanship of Mr. Yazdi, head of the judiciary. At the meeting, he referred to the release of Iranian student Mehrdad Kowkabi from British jails, and said: I expected the British Government to act more rapidly in this regard because such incidents have negative effects on the two countries' relations.

He rejected any kind of political deals over the release of a British spy, and said: Roger Cooper has committed an offence and has been condemned. He is currently serving his sentence, and it is natural that any prisoner will be released after serving his sentence.

Mr. Yazdi referred to the uprising of the Iraqi people and the Iraqi president's remarks made yesterday. He said: One of the political principles of the Islamic Republic of Iran is noninterference in the affairs of others, and added: Defending the rights of the oppressed does not amount to interference in the affairs of others. Mr. Yazdi rejected such claims, and said: Shedding the blood of innocent Iraqi people is not in the interests of that country's government. He said: The system of the Islamic Republic of Iran believes that the Iraqi government should respect the demands of its own people, and he said that the violation of the sanctity of Islamic holy places and disrespect to the world's Muslims is totally unacceptable and cannot be overlooked. Such actions will have unfortunate consequences.

The head of the judiciary expressed the hope that during the blessed month of Ramadan the Islamic ummah will benefit from the blessings of this month.

Soviet Official Holds Talks on Afghanistan

LD1803223991 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 2030 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Mr. Kasparov, the Soviet roving ambassador, who has come to Tehran to hold talks with our country's authorities about the issue of Afghanistan, outlined the viewpoints of his country about the latest developments in the Afghan issue in the first round of his talks with our Foreign Ministry director-general for Western Asia affairs. Also, at a meeting with the deputy foreign minister for Asia and Oceania, the Soviet roving ambassador stressed: The Soviet Union is aware of the importance of the effective role of the Islamic Republic of Iran in finding any political solution for Afghanistan and believes that this country's [Iran's] views are the key to the final solution to the issue.

Tehran Radio Reports More Black Rainfall

NC1703075891 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Text] According to the Central News Unit, black rain has been falling since last night in Jahrom, (Khefr),

Meymand, and Firuzabad and a large part of Fars Province. The fire from the Kuwaiti oil wells and the air pollution in the Persian Gulf region has caused this black rain. This report states that black snow fell in the village of Kereft in the area of (Khefr).

Pakistan

Prime Minister's Address Marks Start of Ramadan

BK1803121391 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1419 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Address by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on 17 March; place not given—live or recorded]

[Text] My dear countrymen: Peace be upon you. I congratulate you on the advent of the holy month of Ramadan. Our hearts have been shedding tears of blood over the catastrophe that has befallen our Iraqi and Kuwaiti Muslim brethren over the past few weeks. I am even more aggrieved than others because I had struggled up to the last moment to see that the innocent Muslims did not become engulfed by fire and ammunition. I tried my best to save whatever had escaped earlier devastation from further destruction, but I must say with profound regret that we could not keep the destruction under control. This catastrophe is not limited to Iraqi and Kuwaiti Muslims; all Muslims will have to bear the consequences of the tragedy that has befallen them. In my opinion, it is Islamic unity that has suffered the greatest loss from the Gulf war. What can be a greater tragedy than a Muslim becoming a source of misery for another Muslim? After all these blows suffered by Islamic unity and brotherhood, it is now our duty to take the necessary steps to heal these wounds. The prime need is to eliminate mutual hatred and resentments as soon as possible because, after all, only brothers will help brothers. During my Gulf peace mission, I exchanged views on the postwar situation as well. But believe me, we were not prepared to see such colossal destruction. Iraqi and Kuwaiti losses are losses to the Islamic world. The losses suffered earlier by Iran were also a loss to the Islamic world. May God help Muslims to regain their senses and to succeed in establishing a collective organization on the basis of our Islamic ties.

My dear countrymen, we can strengthen our character only with the strength of our mutual understanding, statesmanship, and [words indistinct] and we have demonstrated this in a practical way during the Gulf war. I ask my honorable politicians, elders, and brothers to try to understand the new global character. Our respected politicians tried their best to make political capital by playing up people's sentiments, but now when the ravaged Iraqi people need help, they are sitting idle inside their houses. Were their sympathies limited only to sloganeering? Perhaps they are saddened more by their political failure than by the devastation to the Iraqi people. I leave it to the Pakistani people to decide whether or not the hue and cry raised here in the name of Saddam was based on sincerity or politics. As far as I and the Pakistani Government are concerned, we feel the same amount of pain in our hearts for our Iraqi brethren as we did before. We spent every moment striving to bring an end to the war by any means, and soon after the war ended, we established contacts with our friends and emphasized the need for immediate assistance to the devastated people of Iraq.

Dear countrymen, after the cold war, this new world which has ushered in a new era with the liberation of Kuwait through the United Nations cannot remain peaceful so long as the problems of Kashmir and Palestine are not resolved. The time has come for the five powers with veto rights and other major powers to show the same cooperation and urgency in resolving the Kashmir and Palestine problems as they did in ensuring the implementation of the UN resolutions; otherwise, the dream of global peace will remain unrealized.

Dear countrymen, recently, I also visited Pakistan's great, tested and true friend, China. As always, the views of Pakistan and China on various regional and international affairs today are similar to a great extent. China also opposes the presence of foreign forces in the Gulf; it also favors a security system based on respect for sovereignty and indpendence of the region. I am sincerely thankful to the Chinese leaders for their expressions of sincerity and goodwill to me and Pakistani people during my talks with them.

China, in expressing its readiness to construct a nuclear plant, has extended extremely commendable cooperation in supporting the progress of our program as we try to ensure our country's industrial and technological advancement. Progress in the areas of technology, industry, and even agriculture in the contemporary world is impossible without an adequate supply of energy. My first priority is to increase Pakistan's capacity for generating power—for which the government has decided to abandon the path of long-term planning and instead has decided to implement plans that can yield immediate results—and to eliminate the power shortage in the country as soon as possible. The construction and expansion of roads will also be implemented at revolutionary speed. The installation of telephones, God willing, will not continue to be a problem by next year. The solid infrastructure I am establishing for industrial and agricultural development is aimed to benefit the poor. I am opposed to restricting the fruits of progress to a certain class of people. While ensuring increased production, I will also give full attention to see that athese benefits reach the poor. The basic objective of all my plans and actions is to remove the blemish of poverty from the beautiful face of Pakistan. We believe in work, hard work.

During the short period of the past four months, my government not only set a record in legislation, but also carried out far-reaching economic reforms, previously inconceivable. This was possible because we consider politics to be only a means to serve the people. The National Assembly passed eight bills during the current

session alone, while the former assembly passed only seven bills during all of 1989.

I would rather not discuss the details of my economic reforms, but I certainly would like to draw your attention to an important political aspect of these reforms: It is democracy itself that benefited the most from the liberalization of the economy, because the worst (?thing) about the nationalization of financial resources is that it enables the government in power to make the entire nation subservient to its political objectives and interests. History testifies to this. We have seen how the people's money deposited in banks was considered personal property and liberally distributed among some favorite persons as loans and how these funds were used [words indistinct] as political bribes, and a mockery was made of the entire democratic process.

A free economy leads to freedom of politics in a country and the people's mandate (?guides) the administrative system in the real sense. This is called democracy. I would like to say something about denationalization. Some self-seeking elements are waging a campaign against this policy. The fact is that they have become accustomed to luxury and comfort acquired through your tax money. They do not want to leave all of this behind. I consider each of your pennies as your trust in me. I will not, God willing, let these people benefit from your hard-earned money. I trust my people and they have confidence in me. The world witnessed our national confidence during the Gulf war. The people of Pakistan will not fall into the trap of those seeking political interests. It has been proved today that the principled position adopted by the people and their elected government was correct and realistic. In the case of denationalization, time will prove, God willing, that the policy we adopted is in the interests of Pakistan and its poor people. The government will show no leniency in implementing this policy.

The desire to govern and the use of powers of those who were at the helm of authority in the past turned the government [words indistinct] in every aspect. Governments do not run factories, businesses, banks and insurance companies, the newspaper industry, shipping industry, and ports. Their task is to formulate development plans and provide peace, law, order, and justice to the people. Many governments of the past did everything—except these three things. I am trying to create a free atmosphere by [words indistinct]. To me, that government is best which governs least. I consider the government which governs least as the same one responsible for providing development and security, instead of administering authority over the economy and citizens. Under denationalization, which is part of our policy, we are actually lifting undue controls.

The common people have a right over government land just as they do over government industries. Therefore, along with denationalization, we have decided to distribute quickly cultivable government land to landless farmers. Steps will soon be taken in this regard as well. Distribution of land among landless laborers has already begun.

My dear countrymen, the other day, the Islami Jamhoori Ittehad and our allies achieved a grand success in the election for 40 vacant Senate seats; we maintained our two-thirds majority in the Senate. Efforts were made to create misunderstandings about these elections, but you have witnessed that all apprehensions proved baseless and all elected members freely exercised their right to vote.

If we want to stabilize our democratic system, then we will also have to respect democratic traditions. We will have to avoid destructive pastimes that we start as soon as a new government assumes office. You have to think about what kind of government is desirable. The nation has reached its destination after a prolonged struggle. This is the first time in the country's history that power was transferred peacefully to a freely elected popular government. And with a decisive majority in both houses of parliament, the government ushered in an era of (?stability). By the grace of God, we initiated effective steps in all sectors in our first 100 days in office. Results of some of these efforts are now being seen. By making our candidates successful in the recent Senate elections, the elected representatives of the people have wholeheartedly endorsed our policies. On the other hand, the people also expressed satisfaction over our performance in this brief period. The poor can see a bright ray of hope after a long time. The hope of a pleasant future has emerged in their hearts, but it is a matter of great distress that some of our politicians cannot tolerate even this little happiness on the part of our countrymen. They are trying to destroy the democratic system by spreading misunderstandings in the country, while at the same time they are trying to create anxiety among the people by spreading rumors. Are they happy creating anxiety among the people? [Words indistinct] that a section of our national press which claims to be the champion of democracy easily becomes the tool of elements who tend to destroy the happiness of our people.

In a democracy, it is not only the political leadership but also the media that is on trial. If journalism means providing correct information to the people and refraining from corrupting their minds by spreading rumors, fabricating stories, and misleading [words indistinct], then I leave this to my journalist friends.

My dear countrymen, I once again offer my congratulations to the nation on the advent of the holy month of Ramadan and pray to God that this month of grace and divine blessings may herald an era of peace, happiness, and prosperity for Pakistan, the Islamic community, and the entire world. I had desired to provide maximum relief to the Pakistani people during the days of Ramadan fasting, but you are aware of the serious economic difficulties that your government is facing these days. Our economy is facing immense pressure in the wake of the Gulf crisis. Nevertheless, my government

has decided that during this auspicious month, a further 10 percent rebate will be given on a few essential commodities, including wheat flour, rice, lentils, basin flour, and beverages sold at concessional rates in all utility stores. We have also decided to provide a special assistance of 100 rupees each, in addition to the normal 150 rupees per person to people deserving assistance from the tithe fund during the month of Ramadan. This will add up to a total cost of about 150 million rupees.

I promised you we would reduce oil prices whrn and if it became possible. The actual position is that even after the end of the Gulf war, Pakistan has not yet received any concessions on the prices of oil, but in spite of that, we have decided to reduce oil prices in order to lessen your burden. Details of this reduction will be announced at a news conference by the minister for petroleum and natural resources immediately after my speech. On the occasion of the auspicious month of Ramadan, I appeal to the business and trading community to seek the blessings of God and the nation by voluntarily announcing a reduction of two percent in their profit in deference to the sanctity of the month of Ramadan, for which I shall be grateful to them. Would it not be a good idea if a few people involved in the filthy trade of food adulteration were to make a pledge on the first day of Ramadan to sell only pure foodstuffs in the future and eliminate forever the scourge of adulterated food. This would save their children from eating their daily bread earned by unfair means.

My dear countrymen, I also appeal to you to pray to God sincerely during this auspicous month—in which all prayers are accepted by God—for the progress, stability, and prosperity of Pakistan and for the unity and independence of Muslims all over the world, especially for the liberation of the Muslims of Kashmir. Let us come and make this holy month of divine blessings a source of unity, progress, and prosperity for the Islamic community through our efforts and prayers. Long live Pakistan.

PRC Military Delegation Arrives in Islamabad

BK1803033691 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] A five-member Chinese military delegation led by General Xu Xin, deputy chief of the General Staff of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, arrived in Islamabad last evening for a week-long official visit to Pakistan. During its stay in Pakistan, the delegation will visit the three military establishments of Pakistan.

Meets Army Chief, Defense Officials

BK1803155991 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] General Xu Xin, the deputy chief of General Staff of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, met Defense Adviser Syed Ijlal Haider Zaidi in Rawalpindi today and discussed bilateral cooperation with him. Earlier, the Chinese delegation visited General Staff Headquarters and met Iftikhar Ahmad Sirohey, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee. Gifts were exchanged on the occasion.

General Xu Xin also visited General Headquarters and met General Mirza Aslam Beg, Army chief of staff, and exchanged views with him on professional matters and other issues of mutual interest.

Khan Urges Implementation of Kashmir Resolution

BK1703165391 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1600 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Text] The president has urged the international community to pay greater attention to resolution of the Kashmir dispute, which is the main obstacle in the way of improvement of Pakistan-India relations as well as durable peace and friendship in the region.

Talking to a former member of British Parliament and ex-president of the Pakistan Society of the UK, Sir Frederic Bennet, in Islamabad, Mr. Ghulam Ishaq Khan said: Encouraged by the recent spate of international efforts to restore Kuwait's independence under UN mandate, the world should take renewed interest in implementing the world body's resolutions on other regional disputes such as Kashmir.

Sir Frederic Bennet, who has just returned from a visit to Azad Kashmir where he met Kashmiri refugees, told the president of the evidence of harrowing brutalities committed by Indian forces in occupied Kashmir. He criticized India for having denied permission to Amnesty International and the International Committee of the Red Cross to visit occupied territory to observe the human rights situation there.

Spokesman Condemns Indian Atrocities in Kashmir

BK1803155191 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Pakistan has once again called upon the Indian Government to resolve the Kashmir dispute peacefully in accordance with the relevant UN resolutions. Condemning the reign of terror and barbarism at the hands of the Indian security forces in occupied Jammu and Kashmir, a Foreign Office spokesman said in Islamabad today that these crimes are being perpetrated against unarmed Muslims on the pretext of maintaining law and order, but aimed at terrorizing and harassing the Kashmiri people. The spokesman added that the recent large-scale house-to-house search operations, deliberate arrests of Kashmiri people, incidents of torture, and molestation of women by paramilitary forces and Indian troops are glaring examples of the inhumane treatment meted out by the Indian forces.

The Pakistan Government has asked the Indian Government to revoke immediately the inhumane laws, such as the Disturbed Areas Act and the Armed Forces Special

Powers Act that are now in force in occupied Jammu and Kashmir and provide protection to the Indian security forces.

Fundamentalist Muslims Demonstrate Against U.S.

BK1503170391 Hong Kong AFP in English 1637 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Text] Islamabad, March 15 (AFP)—The fundamentalist Jamiat-e Eslami Party organised demonstrations throughout Pakistan Friday to denounce attempts by the United States to impose "its hegemony" on the world.

Addressing a rally in eastern Lahore, Jamiat-e Eslami leader Qazi Hussain Ahmed said "after the decline of communism, Islam was the only force which could challenge the hegemony of the United States."

Jamiat-e Eslami took a strong anti-U.S. line during the Gulf war.

MQM Chief on Nationals' Return From Bangladesh

BK1503154291 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Text] A mammoth rally of the Muhajir Qaumi Movement [MQM] workers was held in Karachi today. Addressing the rally, MQM chief Altaf Hussain called upon Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to make arrangements for the early repatriation of Pakistanis stranded in Bangladesh.

Sri Lanka

Government Reopens Embassy in Kuwait

BK1903112691 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Sri Lanka has reopened its embassy in Kuwait. It is the first embassy office to be opened by an Asian country after the Gulf war. The four-member special presidential representative delegation, which participated in the opening ceremony, said that Kuwait has special place with regard to Sri Lanka. This delegation is led by (Janak Makhavithya). The others are the chairman of the Foreign Employment Bureau, (David Souza); the chairman of the National Apprentice Board, A.J.M. (Muzammil); and Commodore (Tissera). The delegation met Sri Lankans presently serving in Kuwait and inquired into their welfare and needs. They said that the Sri Lankans were safe there.

Indian Envoy Meets With Non-LTTE Tamils

BK1603095491 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 16 Mar 91

[Text] In Sri Lanka, diplomatic efforts are continuing for effecting a consensus between key Tamil and Muslim parties as a first step to finding a lasting solution to the ethnic problem in the northeast. The Indian high commissioner, Mr. N.N. Jha, yesterday called a meeting of non-LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] Tamil groups in Colombo to discuss the Tamil people's point of view for further action to approach the Muslim parties. The meeting was a part of the continuous process of consultations. A spokesman of the Indian High Commission said the consensus would be presented at the next all-party meeting for consideration.

The meeting was attended by representatives of the EPRLF [Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front], PLOTE [People's Liberation Organization of Tamil Eelam], TELO [Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization], TULF [Tamil United Liberation Front], and EROS [Eelam Revolutionary Organization of Students].

Security Forces' Operations in North, East Noted

BK1703102491 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0847 GMT 17 Mar 91

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, Mar 17 (LANKAPUVATH)—Security forces have set up seven new camps in the north, and are poised for a major operation against Tiger terrorists there, according to informed sources, states the SUNDAY OBSERVER.

Sri Lanka Army Commander Lt. Gen. Hamilton Wanasinghe told the SUNDAY OBSERVER that he was confident that the situation in the north would return to normalcy as more battalions are being deployed there. Referring to the situation in the East, Lt. Gen. Wanasinghe said that there, too, heavy operations were under way.

Prime Minister D.B. Wijetunge who was last week sworn in as state minister for defence visited Vavuniya Saturday and met several senior government and security forces officials at the Kachcheri [district office]. He discussed various means to restore normalcy in the area. The Army commander said that farmers in the north faced severe hardships as LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] terrorists had created havoc and destroyed vital bridges there. He had discussions with irrigation department officials, who have now rebuilt these bridges.

Meanwhile, the Special Task Force has launched a program to train fresh commandos in guerrilla warfare. Their training will last three months after which they will be equipped to deal with the Tiger onslaughts.

Security forces have intensified their search for Tamil separatist guerrillas, killing five more militants in separate clashes in north-eastern Sri Lanka, a military spokesman here said on Saturday. The spokesman said bitter fighting was reported mainly from the east where government troops have been hunting for guerrillas of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). "Security forces on Friday shot dead three LTTE rebels in the eastern port district of Trincomalee," the spokesman said, while troops killed another rebel as he tried to escape from Army custody in neighbouring Batticaloa District.